



The Survey Says...

Kevin Babcock, General Manager/CEO

Thank you to the members who participated in Jackson Electric's recent telephone survey. This was an approximate seven-minute survey. Within those seven minutes, we were able to gather information that will help guide the cooperative over the next three to five years. We are still in the process of reviewing the entire report, but this is what we have learned thus far:

- Most members rely on this magazine and the quarterly member newsletter to receive information regarding the co-op. Thank you for reading.
- Nine in 10 members say they have a cell or smart-phone. This is significantly higher than in 2011 when the last member survey was conducted.
- More than half of the members use their cell phone for text messaging; 36 percent for email. Younger members utilize social media.

Meet New Friends – Learn Beyond the Classroom



Join Jackson Electric Cooperative's Youth Ambassador Program

Open to All Area High School Juniors and Seniors

- Build leadership skills, learn about cooperative principles and careers, meet new friends
- Learn how to write a resumé and complete a job application
- Tour Dairyland Power Cooperative's Administration building and Genoa Power Plant
- Apply for a \$1,500 scholarship
- Apply for an opportunity to attend the Electric Youth Tour in Washington, D.C.

For more information, go to www.jackelec.com or email cblaken@jackelec.com.

- Members are most likely to utilize planned and unplanned power outage alerts and updates through text messages.
- The co-op received excellent ratings in power restoration, but lack a bit in keeping members informed on the status of the outages.

Information from this survey was used in a strategic planning session that was held near the end of June. During this planning session, top initiatives were discussed and the implementation of strategies to meet the cooperative's goals begin. Another member telephone survey will be conducted in the fall, with emphasis on member service and cooperative programs and services.

Reaching the Millennial Generation

In this issue on page 28, you will see photos of Jackson Electric Cooperative scholarship recipients. These students set their sights on higher education. It is an honor for Jackson Electric to assist these students in their continuing education. The "millennial generation," as this group of young people is identified as, is described by a Fox Business report to be skilled and available to go beyond the job description to become innovative businesspersons inside a company. We look forward to this generation coming into the workforce within the next four to five years.

This generation is growing up in the age of emails to cell phones and everything in between. They desire instant communication. According to our recent member survey, communication is desired through a variety of means, one being texts. Millennials understand and use these modern-day skills and will only learn more about technology as they mature. Because they have these skills, they will be an asset to any type of business. If you think about it, millennial employees are the product of those who they could possibly replace.

Enjoy your July 4th holiday weekend. Sometime during the festivities, take a moment to honor those who have fought and continue to fight for our freedoms. ■

Local Events for You to Enjoy

Thunderbird Village Flea Market and Craft Show, Hatfield – July 3–5
Melrose 4th of July Celebration – July 4
Hatfield Fireworks over Lake Arbutus – July 4
Festival in the Park, Black River Falls – July 4
Jackson County Beef Cookout – July 11
Karner Blue Butterfly Festival, Black River Falls – July 17–18
Melrose Field Days – July 18–19
Jackson County Fair – July 29–August 2

Source: Black River Area Chamber





Take the Intimidation Out of Online Bill Paying

Jackson Electric Cooperative member service representatives field several calls throughout the month in regards to the online bill payment site, Bill4U. This secure online service is available to the cooperative's members who choose to pay their electric bill online, rather than writing a check. However, members who pay their bill online have access to more than just a bill-paying site.



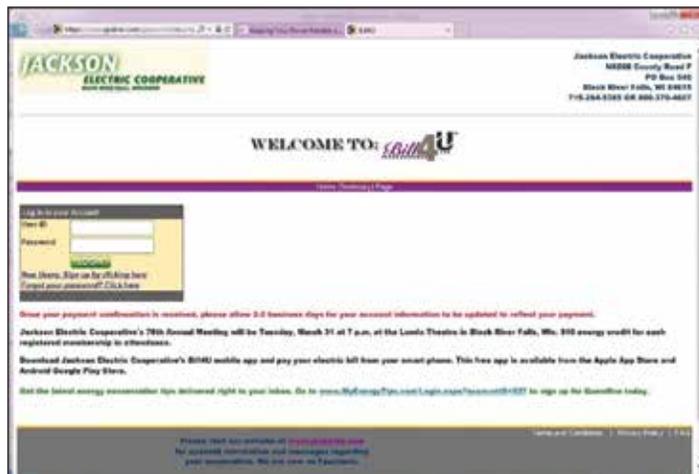
If you've never been to the Bill4U site, this month may be the time to try it. Let's walk through the Bill4U site.

First of all, you'll need Internet access. Once that is established, go to www.jackelec.com. Scroll near the bottom of the home page and click on "Your Online Bill Payment Service" tab. This tab links you to the log-in page of Bill4U. If you are a new user, you'll have to establish a user ID and password. Once your identification is established, you can access your account information 24 hours a day, seven days a week from anywhere Internet access is available. Remember, this is a secured site. When you get to this screen, make sure your URL address begins with "https:". This indicates you are in a secure session.

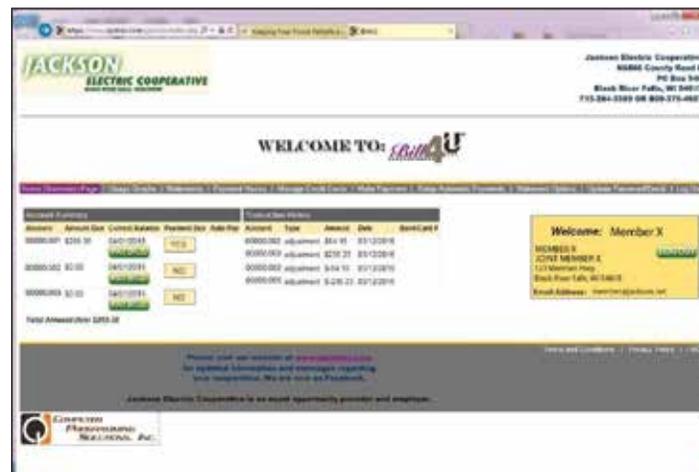
On the Bill4U home page, you'll have access to your electrical usage, current and past statements, and payment history. You'll be able to set up automatic payments, make a payment online, and sign up for paperless payments. If you have a recurring payment withdrawn each month from your credit card, please remember to update the expiration date of your credit card. Some institutions are issuing new cards, and you may need to update your card's number on Bill4U.

We encourage the use of Jackson Electric's online bill-paying service. It's convenient for the member, and when you opt to receive paperless statements, the expense to mail your paper bill is eliminated. It costs the cooperative 52 cents to mail one bill each month. That doesn't seem like much, but multiply that number by 6,300 bills. That's more than \$3,200 per month to mail bills.

If you have any questions regarding the Bill4U site, please feel free to contact our office. ■



Set up your user ID and password if you are a first-time Bill4U user.



You have access to your account information on this page. View past statements, manage your credit cards, setup automatic payments, and view your electrical usage.



If you think your electric bill is higher than anticipated, view the "Usage Graphs" page. You can view the amount of kilowatt-hours used for each meter. If the usage peaks on a specific day, think back to what may have changed in your household that day. Maybe you used your washing machine, your clothes dryer, or plugged in an electric space heater.

Jackson Electric Awards Scholarships to Area Youth



Kandi Shramek
Youth Ambassador

Since 1998, Jackson Electric Cooperative has distributed nearly \$78,000 in scholarships to graduating high school seniors who plan to continue their education beyond high school. This past spring, Jackson Electric presented \$7,500 to area graduating high school seniors.

The annual scholarship program encourages post-secondary education for area high school seniors by assisting them in financing their education. A \$1,000 scholarship was offered to eight high schools in Jackson Electric Cooperative's service territory, as well as those students who are home-schooled, open-enrolled, or attend a private school. A \$1,500 scholarship is awarded to a deserving senior who participates in Jackson Electric Cooperative's Youth Ambassador Program. ■

Scholarships were offered to Neillsville and Whitehall High Schools and home-schooled/open-enrolled/private school, but no applications were submitted.



Josh Farnsworth
Alma Center-Humbird-Merrillan High School



Mitchel Gjerseth
Black River Falls High School



Bethany Ginther
Blair-Taylor High School



Lee Ann Hertzfeldt
Melrose-Mindoro High School



Greta Boehnen
Osseo-Fairchild High School



Jahni Brandt
Sparta High School

Summer Help Hired at Jackson Electric Cooperative

You may have seen these faces the past month wearing a Jackson Electric T-shirt. The following students were hired by Jackson Electric for the summer months:

Derek Blaken recently graduated from Melrose-Mindoro High School. He will be attending the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the fall, majoring in biological systems engineering. Derek enjoys running, snowmobiling, ATVing, and hunting. He also helps with the North Bend Lions Club annual



Smelt Fries. Welcome, Derek.

Kandi Shramek is a graduate of Lincoln High School. She will be attending Viterbo University in La Crosse in the fall, majoring in nursing. Kandi was a participant of Jackson Electric's Youth Ambassador Program for the past two years. Kandi enjoys hunting, fishing, running, snowmobiling, riding dirt bikes, and doing crafts. She's been involved in her local 4-H club and is the Alma Center Strawberry Festival's 2nd Attendant. Welcome, Kandi.



Sabrina Gunning, graduate of Black River Falls High School, will be attending the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire in the fall, majoring in nursing. You may have seen Sabrina last summer mowing the lawn at Jackson Electric. Sabrina enjoys reading, baking, and watching Netflix. She helps with the American Red Cross blood drives, Project Christmas, and was a student director with the Black River Falls High School Marching Tigers. She is also a certified nursing assistant. Welcome, Sabrina. ■



Load Management 101: Peak Alerts

By **Ron Blado,**
Member Services Manager

Jackson Electric Cooperative uses a tool called load management to assist in keeping the cost of electricity affordable during periods of high electric demand. The intent of the load management program is to “shed” load when the cost to generate electricity is high. Load management typically occurs at the height of the summer and winter seasons, but may be called upon during the spring and fall, if necessary.

The next few months, I will be educating you on the different levels of load management. Because we are right in the middle of peak alert season, June-July-August, I will describe the peak alert concept and procedure.

The need for load management is determined by an analysis of daily

electric demand monitored by Jackson Electric’s power supplier, Dairyland Power Cooperative. A peak alert will be issued when electric usage is at its highest level. When the decision is made to issue a peak alert, Dairyland Power sends a radio signal to the load management receiver located at the member’s home. This receiver is typically located near your electric meter.

Because the receiver is wired into the home’s breaker box, specifically the water heater and possibly the electric heat breaker, the signal is able to interrupt water heating and home heating and cooling until the demand period has passed. Cooling units are cycled on/off every 15 minutes. These units are automatically turned back on through the signal.

Peak alert days are weather

driven. That means peak periods are most likely to occur on extremely hot and cold days. Summer peak periods occur between the hours of 1 to 5 p.m. and winter peak periods occur between the hours of 5 to 10 p.m.

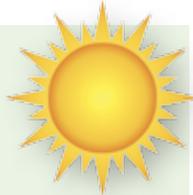
On peak alert days, the cost of power to Jackson Electric increases substantially. Those increased costs are passed on to the member in the power cost adjustment (PCA) and the energy rate. Anything that members can do to limit their electric usage during a peak alert period will help in keeping the energy rate competitive.

Most of Jackson Electric’s members are aware of the rising cost of electric generation and distribution. Many have taken measures to reduce consumption by replacing old lighting technologies with new ones, replacing older windows, adding insulation, and many other energy efficiency steps.

If you have questions, please contact our office. ■

Explore Outdoors Safely

Summer is in full swing, and that means it is time for fun in the sun! As you find yourself spending more time outdoors, Jackson Electric Cooperative reminds you to stay safe.



- Pay attention to where you place metal ladders or dig for fence posts. Before you start any project, look up and avoid overhead power lines. Keep a minimum of 10 feet between you and overhead lines.
- If you are planning a project that requires digging, remember to dial 811 first to find out if the area you will be working in is clear of underground power lines. Power tools should be kept away from wet surfaces, and outlets should not be overloaded.
- Children should never climb trees near power lines—always assume a wire is live. Fly kites and remote-controlled airplanes in large open areas like a park or a field, away from trees and overhead power lines.
- Planning to take a dip in the pool? Electrical devices, such as stereos, should be kept at least 10 feet away from water sources, and outdoor electrical outlets should always be covered. If you hear a rumble of thunder, exit the pool right away.
- Summer storms can be dangerous if you’re caught in the wrong place at the wrong time. If you’re outdoors during a storm, move to suitable shelter with covered sides, and stick to low-lying ground if possible.

These are just a few tips to remember. Have some fun out there, and always keep safety in mind!—Source: NRECA’s *Straight Talk*, Abby Berry ■



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