



Kevin Babcock,  
General Manager/  
CEO

## COST-OF-SERVICE STUDY IN PROGRESS

**Last August, the board of directors and management retained the services of a consultant to**

**conduct a cost-of-service study for Jackson Electric Cooperative. The last study was conducted in 2011.**

The objective of a cost-of-service study is to identify the cost of providing service to each rate class based on electric load and service attributes and to meet the cooperative's revenue requirements. Rates are analyzed so they are fair and equitable to all rate classes. This process is not completed overnight. It takes several months to gather information, analyze, review, and implement the results.

The final review of the results from this study will take place at your board of directors April regular board meeting.

America's electric cooperatives have launched a non-partisan, nationwide effort to promote civic engagement and voter participation in the communities they serve. A new website, [vote.coop](http://vote.coop),

offers co-op members information on the voter registration process in their state, dates of elections, information on the candidates running in those elections, and explanations of the eight key issues the campaign aims to address.

Wisconsin will hold its presidential primary on Tuesday, April 5. Your vote counts.

To conclude my column, I would like to recognize the employees who help keep your lights on. The second Monday of April has been designated by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association as National Lineman Appreciation Day. We proudly recognize all electric linemen for the services they perform around the clock in sometimes

dangerous conditions to keep the power on and protect the public's safety.

If you see one of Jackson Electric's linemen, take a moment to thank him for the work they do. #thankalineman

April 27 is recognized as Administrative Professionals Day. This is an opportunity to thank those employees who work in the cooperative's office. They are the people who answer the phones, help members with high bill concerns, answer the rebate questions, arrange appointments, take the outage phone calls, and, in general, help fulfill members' needs to the best of their abilities. At times, their jobs are demanding and challenging. We thank them for the work they do.



Above: Jackson Electric's line crew, left to right, Dan McKeivitt, Dalton Berg, David Ripp, Steve Tenner, Brian Schultz, Jesse Hansen, Hazy Wood, and Matt Bush. Right: Jackson Electric's office, warehouse, mapping, and metering crew, seated left to right, Bertina Zager, Carmen LaGaisse, and Pam Bjerke. Standing, left to right, Brian Dolesy, Scott Peterson, Steve Bucholz, and Don Fortun.



## 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.



1

of vegetables every week for 20 weeks, depending on the weather, from June through October. The vegetables in the box are seasonal. For example, in the spring members could receive radishes, asparagus, peas, onions, rhubarb, and more. Members choose either a full share, which typically feeds a family of four and averages six to eight different vegetables, or half share, which feeds a family of two.

The Seekamps own 20 acres and an additional 60 are in a family trust. They are the third generation of Seekamps to farm the land. Jason’s grandfather bought the land in the early 1950s and grew strawberries and green beans. Jason’s dad, John, helped farm the land, and it was eventually handed down to Jason.

Ashley also comes from a bloodline of produce farmers. She grew up on a produce farm in Nevada where rainfall is limited. She recalls breaking open a watermelon and eating it for a snack right out of the field when she was younger. Her mom also owned and operated a garden shop and nursery before moving ▶

One can’t even begin to tell the story of origination of J and A Produce and CSA the way that co-owner and operator Ashley Seekamp can. She and her husband, Jason, have a passion to help those in the community. That appetite, so to speak, and because “vegetable farming is in their blood” are what drive them to successfully grow quality produce for members who participate in their CSA.

The Seekamps started growing and selling produce in 2008 and by 2011, they added CSA to their original farm name, J and A Produce. Community Supported Agriculture, or CSA, is a model for farmers to market their product. The growers and consumers share in the risks and benefits of production. Typically, members of the farm CSA pledge in advance to cover anticipated costs of the farm operation. In return, members receive shares in the farm’s bounty throughout the growing season. On the

other hand, members also share in the risks of farming such as poor yields due to unfavorable weather conditions or pests. Ashley says, “Members put their support and trust in the farm.”

Why the incorporation of a CSA? Ashley simply states, “We’re helping our community.” She continues to explain how offering fresh produce to families and individuals encourages healthier eating options and the option to purchase locally grown produce. She says members know when they pick up their “share,” it is fresh. When purchasing produce from a store, you don’t know when it was picked and how long it’s been on a truck.

When mentioning “shares,” one may think of a stockholder investment. It’s a similar concept with a produce CSA since members share in the risks and rewards of the harvest. Ashley states that shares are simply a “box of vegetables.” Members receive a share or box

### What’s offered at J and A Produce and CSA:

Asparagus	Carrots	Flowers
Radishes	Cucumbers	Broccoli
Lettuce	Herbs	Winter squash
Rhubarb	Red potatoes	Brussel sprouts
Onions	Bell peppers	Strawberries
Snow peas	Sweet corn	Maple syrup
Snap peas	Tomatoes	Homemade jams and jellies
Spinach	Cabbage	



2



3



4

1. Fresh produce is picked, cleaned, and packaged for CSA members. 2. Homemade jams and jellies and maple syrup are available for purchase at J and A Produce and CSA. 3. Even the youngest have smiles when fresh produce is available. (photos submitted) 4. J and A Produce and CSA is a family affair. Jason and Ashley have three children, left to right, LillyAnn, Landon, and Leah. All three help on the farm, along with three students who help during the summer. Photo courtesy of Dina Aasen Photography & Studio, Whitehall, Wis.

to Wisconsin in 1996. While here, they discovered it was an amazing place to grow vegetables. She says, “You don’t have to water three times a day like we did in Nevada.” Have you heard of “Garden Wise with Arlena” on WEAU-TV? Well, that’s Ashley’s mom.

J and A Produce and CSA use sustainable farming practices. They do not use synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, or fungicides on their produce. You will also see J and A Produce and CSA at local farmers’ markets, and their produce stand will be open in the spring where produce will be available to the public for purchase. Ashley says their farm is a way of life, and sharing vegetables with friends, family, and the community is what brings them happiness.

Shares can be purchased online at [jandaproduce.com](http://jandaproduce.com), by e-mail at [jandaproduce@hotmail.com](mailto:jandaproduce@hotmail.com) or by contacting Ashley at 715.333.2292. They are located at W10232 Carol Road, just north of Black River Falls off Hwy. 12. 

Full share purchase - \$545  
Half share purchase - \$345

Shares can be purchased until April 15. Members pick up their shares Mondays from 5-7 p.m., June 6 to October 17. Pick up locations are also available, prices will vary. Please contact Ashley for more information.

## WHAT GOES INTO THE FACILITY CHARGE?

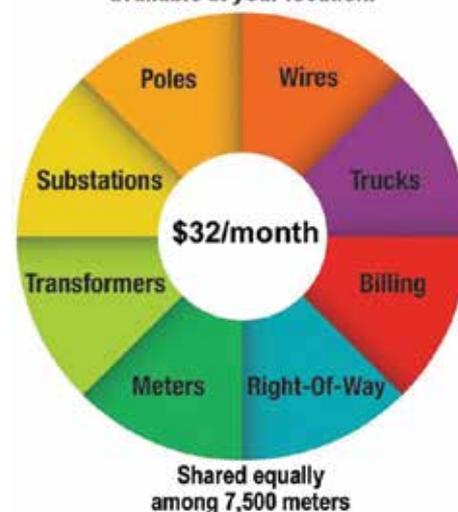
The facility charge includes everything needed to provide electricity to your home. It does not include the energy charge, which is the actual amount of electricity that you use and is billed in kilowatt-hours (kWhs). Over the next few months, we’ll highlight some of the costs associated with building and maintaining the electric distribution system that makes power available at your location. These costs are included as part of the facility charge and are shared equally among all meters on our lines.

**Power Poles** – Power poles are tested on a 10-year rotation. Jackson Electric averages a 2 to 3 percent rejection rate per year on its poles. When a pole is recommended to be replaced, it is because it shows signs of structure deficiencies. Depending on outside conditions, wooden power poles could potentially maintain their structure for up to 60 years. In 2015, a total of 71 poles were replaced throughout Jackson Electric’s system. The majority of the replacements were due to rejected poles; the others were part of the four-year work plan and vehicle accidents.

- Average cost to install one standard 35-foot power pole (includes pole, hardware, labor, transportation, and overhead): \$1,200
- Approximate number of power poles on Jackson Electric’s system, including area light poles: 18,900

### Facility Charge

*The cost of making power available at your location.*



## BREAK-THROUGH AT YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONGRESS

Three days. More than 100 students. Dynamic speakers. University of Wisconsin–River Falls campus. It’s that time of year when registration opens for the annual Youth Leadership Congress (YLC), sponsored by Wisconsin electric cooperatives including Jackson Electric Cooperative.

This year’s YLC will be held July 13–15 at the UW–River Falls campus. Students will participate in team-building activities, learn about cooperative principles, and have an opportunity to interview and campaign to be part of the Wisconsin Youth Board. All sessions are designed to develop the next generation of community leaders. Those students attending YLC also have an opportunity to apply for a \$1,000 scholarship offered by the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association.

Jackson Electric Cooperative sponsors high school students who will be sophomores, juniors, or seniors in the fall to attend this event. Enrollment and transportation costs are covered by the co-op. Learn how you can break-through at YLC by contacting Carol at [cblaken@jackelec.com](mailto:cblaken@jackelec.com) by May 27, 2016. For more information on YLC, go to [www.jackelec.com](http://www.jackelec.com).

## APPLIANCE RECYCLING REBATES AVAILABLE

Spring cleaning begins with the recycling of large appliances that are no longer of value to a homeowner. Jackson Electric now offers a \$25 rebate to those members who recycle a freezer, refrigerator, or room air conditioner. The following qualifications do apply:

- The appliance being recycled must have been installed on Jackson Electric Cooperative’s lines.
- Appliance must be in working order, removed from service, and fully disposed of following federal, state, and local laws.
- Documentation must be submitted within 60 days of recycle date.
- Submit completed Appliance Recycling Rebate Application and Proof of Appliance Recycling form (to be completed by licensed recycler) to Jackson Electric Cooperative.

For more information and forms, go to [www.jackelec.com/content/rebates-and-incentives](http://www.jackelec.com/content/rebates-and-incentives) or contact our office.



## LONGTIME EMPLOYEE LOOKS FORWARD TO RETIREMENT

After 27 years of employment at Jackson Electric Cooperative, Scott Peterson will shut down his computer and close his door one final time on April 22. That is the last day of Scott's employment at Jackson Electric and the first day of his retirement.

A local boy, born and raised in the Kenyon Valley area, Scott helped on the family farm for the first 18 years of his life. After moving off the farm and experiencing several jobs, Scott enrolled at Western Wisconsin Technical College, now known as Western Technical College, to earn a degree as an office computer specialist. Soon after graduation he landed a job at H&R Block in Black River Falls.

In 1989, he was offered a job at Jackson Electric Cooperative as an office assistant. While at the co-op, his role changed several times. He worked as a receptionist, payroll clerk, meter reader, and finally the work order/new services clerk. Many of you may have met Scott if you were planning to build a new home or another structure that needed power supplied to it.

Scott says technology has changed the most since his first day at the co-op. He says, "When I started here, we worked with multi-column ledgers and an adding machine. Yes, we called it an adding machine, not a calculator." Two computers were used to communicate to Dairyland Power to post payments, transportation, and payroll. He adds that the staking sheets and mapping were all done manually. Jackson Electric used to have meter readers who physically went to the members' homes to read the meters. Now, everything is done with the aid of a computer and radio signals.

Scott recalls many memorable events from his time at Jackson Electric. He says he always enjoyed the conversations he had with former general manager Art Larson. They would discuss how the co-op operated back in the "good ol' days" and Larson's time as a POW in Germany during WWII. Scott also talks about how the move from the old office building in downtown Black River Falls to the co-op's new location was an experience for all the employees.

Scott says he is looking forward to his retirement. He already has a "honey-do list" from his wife, Wendy. He plans on working around his house, gardening, camping, riding his Harley, visiting his parents a little bit more, and traveling with Wendy.

## SOLAR ARRAY UPDATE

The chart below shows Jackson Electric Cooperative's 9.75-kilowatt (kW) solar array's output.

To put these numbers into perspective, residential and farm consumers on Jackson Electric Cooperative's system in 2015 used an average of 984 kilowatt-hours (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](http://www.jackelec.com) and click on the Solar Array Output tab.

SOLAR ARRAY OUTPUT (kWh)				
	2013	2014	2015	2016
JAN		918.58	495.76	689.71
FEB		1,280.05	1,060.87	949.31
MAR		1,365.43	1,420.35	
APR		1,016.75	1,334.47	
MAY		1,271.49	1,175.62	
JUN		1,194.80	1,264.97	
JUL		1,338.32	1,440.83	
AUG		1,236.23	1,189.53	
SEP		1,189.47	1,322.79	
OCT		1,051.26	1,076.86	
NOV		585.67	815.11	
DEC	578.17	466.29	379.26	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>578.17</b>	<b>12,914.34</b>	<b>12,976.42</b>	<b>1,639.02</b>

## CONSTRUCTION PLANS?

If you're planning to build a house, shed, or livestock facility and need electric service installed, please contact Jackson Electric Cooperative to schedule an appointment to discuss your electric service needs. We can also help with electric heating and cooling options, water heating, and Energy Star rebates for residential, business, and agricultural.



1. Scott plans to explore more areas on his Harley during retirement as well as spend more time with family and friends. 2. Scott's family, left to right, daughter Laura with her family, Kennedy, Doug, and Rylea Lindow; Scott and his wife, Wendy (Speedy); and their daughter, Sierra.



Customer Service 715.284.5385  
800.370.4607  
Outage Reporting 855.222.DARK (3275)  
Diggers Hotline 800.242.8511  
[www.jackelec.com](http://www.jackelec.com)

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 546  
Black River Falls, WI 54615  
Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Board of Directors: Gary Woods, President  
Jerry Huber, Vice President  
David Peasley, Secretary-Treasurer  
Daniel Smrekar, Junior Jacobson, Stanley Gran, Brian Huber, Chris Curran, Jerry Wagner

Kevin Babcock, General Manager/CEO

*Jackson Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner