

# Get Your Piece of the Pie!

When you sign up to receive electric service from SCEC you become a member of our electric cooperative. Co-ops operate to provide a service at cost. Excess funds, known as margins, are allocated and refunded as capital credits to members based on how much they paid during a year.



## CAPITAL CREDIT REFUNDS FROM 2003 AND 2020 WILL APPEAR ON YOUR NOV. 1 BILL

Service Address	Billing Date	Due Date
1234 RIDGEWAY ST	11/1/2023	11/16/2023

Current Statement	
Previous Balance	145.00
Payment Received	145.00-
Balance Forward	.00
- - - ELECTRIC SERVICE - - -	
Daily Fixed Charge 31 days @ \$1.1500/day	35.65
Mtr# 00000      600 kWh	
Energy Charge 600 KWH@ \$0.1120/kWh	61.60
Subtotal for Mtr# 00000	61.60
Power Cost Adjustment	0.00
Capital Credit Refund Applied	106.80-
WI Low Income Assistance & Conservation Fee	1.48
Total Current Due	8.07-
** Amount Due	8.07-

A ' - ' (minus sign) behind numbers indicates a NEGATIVE amount (credit balance) and you do NOT need to make a payment that month!

Capital credits are like a huge pie: Each eligible co-op member gets a piece of pie based on how much energy they used during the year and how much they paid for it. A residential member whose monthly bill is relatively modest will get a small piece of the pie, but larger industrial members who pay thousands of dollars each month receive a bigger piece.

## FROM THE BOARD ROOM



At the Sept. 5 meeting, SCEC's Board of Directors approved the retirement (payment) of \$913,812 in capital credits to all members who paid for electricity from SCEC in 2003 and 2020.

## ATTENTION: Do you have MORE THAN ONE active electric account with SCEC? READ THIS!

Your **Capital Credit Refund** will be applied to your **OLDEST** account on your bill dated Nov. 1, 2023, unless you request otherwise.

If you have more than one active account as of Nov. 1, 2023, and would like your Capital Credit Refund applied to a single account **OTHER** than the oldest account – or if you're not sure which account is your oldest/primary

– please contact the SCEC Billing Team no later than **Monday, Oct. 16, at 12:00 p.m.**

- Complete the Primary Account Designation Request/Inquiry form at [www.scecnnet.net/capital-credits](http://www.scecnnet.net/capital-credits)
- Email [billing@scecnnet.net](mailto:billing@scecnnet.net)
- Call 715-796-7000, Option 4

If you would like your Capital Credit Refund distributed among multiple accounts, you will need to contact us **AFTER** the bill credit appears on your November bill. We do not have the ability to automate the credit to be applied to multiple accounts for each member's specific request(s) and need your permission/approval to determine how to apply each year's refund.

## CELEBRATING NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH

OCTOBER 2023 • Volume 84, Issue 4

### ST. CROIX ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S **Energy** LIFESTYLES MAGAZINE

St. Croix Electric Cooperative  
P.O. Box 160 | 1925 Ridgeway St.  
Hammond, WI 54015

Office: 715-796-7000

Bill Pay: 833-890-9512

Email: [communications@scecn.net](mailto:communications@scecn.net)

**Business Hours:**

Monday-Friday • 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**Electronics Recycling Hours:**


Thursdays only: 12:30-3:30 p.m.


**Call Before You Dig! Diggers Hotline:**

811 | 800-242-8511

**Visit us online:**

[scecn.net](http://scecn.net)

 St. Croix Electric Cooperative

 @StCroixElecCoop

**Cooperative President/CEO:**

Robert Dooley  
[robd@scecn.net](mailto:robd@scecn.net)

*Energy Lifestyles Magazine* is published monthly and mailed to the address on file for every member with an active account.

### About us ...

St. Croix Electric Cooperative is a distribution cooperative in west central Wisconsin, serving members throughout St. Croix County and into the bordering counties of Pierce to the south, Polk to the north and Dunn to the east.

Since being founded in 1937, SCEC has grown to distribute electricity to more than 11,800 member accounts over 1,800 miles of line.



**Rob Dooley**  
President/CEO

This year the theme for National Co-op Month is "Co-ops Grow for the Communities They Serve." Reflecting on this, I started thinking of all the ways our co-op, and the industry as a whole,

has grown and changed since I began my career in the electrical field 30 years ago and I wanted to share some of my memories and experiences with you.

Climbing poles was a huge part of line work and my first assignment was working on a maintenance crew out of a pick-up. We climbed poles to change out or hang transformers and the line workers on the ground raised and lowered them with hand crank rope winches attached to the bed of a pick-up. It was strenuous work, and every aspect of the job took a toll on your body.

Meters were mechanical, and our meter readers went out to read every meter on the system monthly for billing. When we switched to the first generation of AMR (Automated Meter Reading) it was a huge step forward in technology. However, it still had issues that we dealt with often and we still needed to read our three-phase meters manually. Now we have AMI (Advanced Metering Infrastructure) which gives us real time data, reports and restores outages, and even records blinks on the service.

The first time that I was on call for after hour outages, I carried a two-way radio that was patched to our phone system and I took the calls for every outage that came through our system. We didn't have google maps or navigation systems, we had to rely on our paper maps and knowledge of the area to find the members' homes that were out of power. We then moved on to pagers and a dispatch service, yet you couldn't stray far from home because you only had landline phones to respond to the dispatcher. However, this was still a huge upgrade as taking all the outage calls made it tough to focus on getting the power on, and a pager and dispatcher simplified the restoration process for the line crew.

Then, cell phones were introduced into the market, some of the first electronic mapping systems, small bucket trucks, track vehicles, outage management systems, vehicle GPS, battery operated tools, and the list goes on and on. Today, we know that an outage occurs prior to the member calling and we also know when it is restored before the line crew report back to us that the power is on.

Now we are seeing renewable power, electric vehicles and high efficiency appliances as standard items within our service territory. In the past 10 years there has been a huge change in how we construct, maintain and deliver power to our membership with minimal increases in rates to the members over that time frame.

What will we see in the next 10 years?



President and CEO Rob Dooley taking the SCEC all electric Ford Lightning for a test drive.



## A Bit of History...

SCEC officially became a cooperative on Nov. 3, 1937 with 36 incorporating members and directors. Then, the hard work began to secure loans and get members signed on. The fee to become a member was \$5 – the same as it is today – but a lot of money then.

In October of 1938 the Co-op's first office and garage space was rented in the C.C. Wiff building in Baldwin for \$25 a month. SCEC's new, more efficient headquarters in Hammond opened on June 23, 1997.

The Cooperative also purchased its first truck, a Chevrolet, in 1938. The year 2022 saw the first electric truck added to the SCEC fleet with a Ford Lightning.



The C.C. Wiff Building in Baldwin housed the office and garage of the Cooperative from Oct. 1938 until 1953.

The first annual meeting was held in March of 1939 with 305 signed members. The 1940 annual meeting reported 520 members and 179 miles of line. At the time of SCEC's 2023 annual meeting there were over 10,000 signed members and 1,857 miles of line.

The first substation was energized on May 24, 1939 with the first meter being installed and energized at the family farm of Lorents Lorentson in Wilson, account number 1.



Bill Rutzen at Pole 1 where he installed the first meter.

To commemorate SCEC's 75th Anniversary in 2012, the pole was moved and installed in front of the Cooperative office along with a plaque and time capsule.

In the first days of the Cooperative, members read their own meters and mailed in a check every month. The self-reporting system changed in 2000 when automated meter reading was installed, submitting usage data automatically. No more having to trudge to the meter every month. On-line bill payment added even more convenience to members.



The first power digger purchased in October 1952.

In 1952 the Cooperative purchased its first power digger, ending the days of hand-digging poles. In 2020, SCEC purchased an ASV (All-Surface Vehicle) that includes an auger attachment that can dig holes, as well as a rotating claw attachment to pull and set poles much more efficiently and in areas the trucks can't go.

SCEC began placing distribution lines underground in 1972. The first cable plow was purchased and used the same day to plow in the primary conductor in Kinnickinnic township. Today, more than 700 miles of line are underground.

In 1989, SCEC purchased their first in-house computer, a Qantel, to expedite bill processing. Today, all office staff have computers and all aspects of member accounts are accessible through our NISC software. Since the COVID shut-downs in 2020, computers needing replacement are being shifted to laptops to enable staff to transition off-site should the need arise again, keeping accounts running smoothly.

In the early 2000s, SCEC captured the geographic coordinates of all meters with GPS systems, allowing the use of mapping software to help crews identify meter locations during outages. Today all line workers have iPads to use in the field to communicate directly with the office and each other.

## When the lights came on...

*"I reckon there were about a hundred farms along that first section of our feeder lines wired and ready to be hooked up. ... I really wanted to be the one to connect that first farm to the lines of our cooperative. And so I got a meter from our pick-up truck and shoved it into place, with the Lorentsons standing out there in the bright sun to watch what was going on. And then we went inside to see if the lights were working, and by golly, every light in the house was turned on. I reckon they would be 25 watt bulbs, but to us they seemed to be just AS BRIGHT AS THE SUN. And we just stood there and laughed."*  
– Bill Rutzen, first manager of St. Croix County Electric Cooperative, on May 24, 1939\*

*"It felt like a miracle. ... Things changed quickly once we had electricity. It's right there when you need it – convenient."* – Wayne Willink. He was 13 years old when his family farm was connected in July 1939. Wayne said his family's first electric purchases were a refrigerator, a motor for a cream separator and a milking machine. He also remembered getting a barn cleaner in 1946.\*\*

*"Electricity coming to the rural area was one of the greatest things that ever happened. ... Having electric lights and a motor for the well were the most important improvements."*  
– Miles Wittig. He was about 10 years old when his family farm was connected in 1941\*\*

*"It was an exciting time. We used lights, of course. We were given 40 kW per month and never went over it. We had an electric radio that was so useful when the war broke out. My father listened to the news regularly. He was adamant that everyone needed electricity. My mother got a washing machine shortly thereafter."* – Joe Huehnink, 16 years old, 1940-41.\*\*\*

*"The radio was probably the first (electric appliance) after lights, then the washing machine, then eventually a milking machine. In 1945 we put in a bathroom."*  
– Jean Schroeder\*\*\*

\*Quote taken from St. Croix Electric Co-op News 25th Annual Report Review

\*\*Quotes taken from *Lighting the Landscape* by Carol Johnson

\*\*\*Memories collected at the 2007 Annual Meeting



## ENERGY SOLUTIONS: SPOOKY ENERGY SAVINGS

This spooky season, we're sharing a few energy-saving tricks so you can treat yourself to lower energy bills. Here are four simple ways to summon the spirit of energy efficiency.

**Conjure instant savings with a smart thermostat.** One of the easiest ways to save energy is through thermostat control, since home heating and cooling account for a large portion of monthly energy use. Smart thermostats can help you manage heating and cooling costs by learning your daily routine and adjusting the temperature settings accordingly. You can control a smart thermostat from anywhere (through your smart phone), which allows you to prevent unnecessary energy consumption while you're away. Sorcery!



**Get rid of goosebumps by eliminating ghostly drafts.** The winter chill is just around the corner, so now is the time to seal air leaks around your home. Apply caulk and weatherstripping around drafty windows and doors to make your home more comfortable and lower energy use.

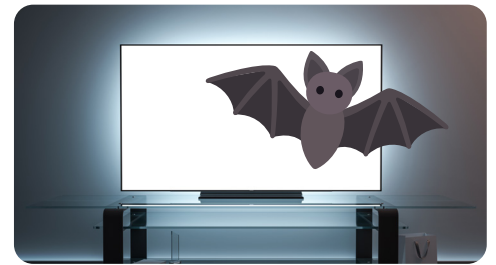


**Illuminate your lair with energy efficient lighting.** LED bulbs use 75% less energy and last 25 times longer than incandescent light bulbs. Make the switch to reduce energy used for lighting. Remember to use LEDs when it's time to decorate for the upcoming holiday season. LED light strings offer an average of 88% energy savings compared to traditional incandescent light strings.

**Stir up savings with countertop cauldrons.** Cooler weather summons our favorite soup recipes. Small countertop appliances like slow cookers use less energy than cooking meals on the stovetop. Grab your book of spells (or recipes) and start stirring up savings in the kitchen.



**Beware of Energy Vampires draining your energy.** Any plugged in home electronic or appliance consumes small amounts of energy even when they're turned off. These small amounts throughout your home can add up. TVs, video game consoles, computers, and satellite/cable boxes are just a few examples. Newer devices are likely to be optimized for decreased power consumption, but the older your device, the more likely it has higher than necessary standby power consumption. Unless you just bought all your devices and appliances this year, there's a good chance there are more than a few "energy vampires" hiding out in your home.



You can plug "energy vampires" into a smart power strip that detects dormant devices or unplug items when not in use, especially those with illuminated controls.

When we look around our homes, there are many opportunities to save energy. So this spooky season, investigate your space and unlock a different kind of magic – the kind that brings real energy savings.



### OPERATION ROUND UP'S FIRST GRANT CYCLE OPEN OCTOBER 9 THROUGH DECEMBER 1

Organizations, individuals and families in the communities SCEC serves can apply for funding during that time.

Applications and more information will be available on our website [scecnet.net](http://scecnet.net).

### ENERGY ASSISTANCE: PROUD TO POWER OUR COMMUNITY WHEN IT MATTERS MOST

October is the month we typically see a surge in **Energy Assistance** requests. Your household may be eligible for **Energy Assistance** based on a number of factors.

Households must complete a **Home Energy Plus Application** to be considered for Energy Assistance through SCEC.

Call West CAP (West Central Wisconsin Community Action Agency, Inc.) at **715-265-4271** to receive an application by mail or by phone interview. The form can be also be found online at [energybenefit.wi.gov](http://energybenefit.wi.gov). (You can also find a link at [scecnet.net/energy-assistance](http://scecnet.net/energy-assistance).)

# #POWERON





## ElectricSense Tip of the Month

Did you know using your dishwasher is more energy efficient than washing a load of dishes by hand? To maximize efficiency, wash full loads in the dishwasher and don't block the arms or other parts that move while the appliance is in use.

For additional savings, turn on the "air dry" setting instead of using the "heat dry" setting and use a rinse aid to help dishes dry faster without spotting and streaking.

Source: Dept. of Energy  
energy.gov



## WINTER DIGGING NOTICE: LAST CALL FOR CONSTRUCTION WITHOUT INCURRING EXTRA FEES

SCEC's construction season nears its end as fall gives way to winter. Although it's a time of "wrapping up," it's not necessarily "winding down" as there is often a scramble to get new services energized before frigid weather hits.

To bring power to locations where there is NO Existing Electric Service, first a site plan must be submitted and the **New Service Fee** paid. The SCEC New Construction Team will then design



and stake the construction

and ask for authorization of the proposed **Construction Charges**, which includes excavation.

In the winter, **Adverse Conditions Fees** may be charged due to the need to use additional equipment to thaw and/or dig frozen ground.



Contact our Operations Team at [operations@sccenet.net](mailto:operations@sccenet.net) or 715-796-7000, Option 6, with questions or concerns about your authorized New Service construction project.

## HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY ASSESSMENTS AVAILABLE



### Some spots are still available for 2023!

A Home Energy Efficiency Assessment is the best first step toward a more comfortable, energy efficient and durable home.

This comprehensive inspection of all aspects of your home zeros in on the issues that matter most, identifying and prioritizing opportunities for energy savings. A full, written report and prioritized list of recommendations is provided.

SCEC's Home Energy Efficiency Assessment program is available to residential accounts with homes that are at least 10 years old and haven't received an assessment from SCEC in the last 10 years. **The cost is \$50 (a \$350 value).** The \$50 charge will be applied to your electric bill after the assessment is completed.

SCEC members who implement recommended solutions from the assessment may be eligible for an Energy Efficiency Incentive up to \$500. Improvements must be completed within 24 months of the audit date. Incentive paperwork must be completed and returned to SCEC within three months after improvements are completed.

**Program is first-come, first-served. Register now for your 2023 assessment!**

For an online Assessment Request Form, Incentive Form and more information visit: [sccenet.net/assessments](http://sccenet.net/assessments)



AD CONNECTIONS is available online at [scecnet.net/ads](http://scecnet.net/ads)

- [Submit an Ad](#) • [Cancel a Listing](#) • [Browse the Classifieds](#)

**FREE**

Trees available to cut in Baldwin. Very easy access for you to cut and load. 651-208-1637

Seven 8-inch chimney blocks – take 8-inch flu. 715-684-9783

Entertainment center, 4 ft. by 4 ft. 715-684-2153 or reudor@baldwin-telecom.net

Treadmill with weights. 715-684-2153 or reudor@baldwin-telecom.net

Koi pond filtration system. All equipment to build an entire koi pond system. Worth \$20,000. 715-549-6593

2 Hammond Organs Model E143 serial # 01748 and Model E182 Serial # E232979. Great for churches. 715-247-3429

Upright piano. 58" x 29" x 40". You move, no stairs. bethsippi@yahoo.com

**FOR SALE – Newly Listed**

8-ft. Kasson pool table with accessories. \$1,100. 715-441-1680

Two 50 ft. x 4 ft. rolls of wooden snow fence. Used for 4 seasons. \$40 each or best offer. Sixteen 6-ft. metal t-posts. \$3 each or best offer. 715-279-0006 or gwruide@gmail.com

265 gal #2 fuel oil tank. 25 years old. Inside entire time. Switched over to natural gas. You haul – Hudson area. \$100. 715-441-3090

Two bar tires on rims, 23" x 10.5" – 12nhs, 6ply, 5 lug rims. Like new – off of a John Deere 318 lawn tractor. \$225. 715-684-9783

Two burgundy leather wing-back chairs with brass tacks and claw feet. Excellent condition. No smoking/pets/children. 715-431-7668

Mixed small pieces of hard wood and soft wood for crafts and hobbies. Feed bag size. \$6 per bag. 651-491-3273

Four cords of oak wood. Needs to be split. \$500. 715-821-9515

Used Sleep Number FULL mattress, new pump and remote. Great shape. \$200. 715-222-0923

Stained Glass equipment. Everything you need from start to finish. \$200. 715-386-1704

Mead reflector telescope with equatorial tripod mount. \$150. Olympus old-fashioned film camera with 3 lenses and tripod mount. \$150. 715-386-1704

**FOR SALE – Previously Listed**

Artisan cast iron table saw. 10" on wheels. Lowered price: \$300. 715-386-1704

Sawmill – left hand, 2 blades. Birch poles – different sizes. Best offer. 715-772-4442

1989 Honda 1500 Goldwing Trike – Mechanic Special. \$5,000 cash. 715-781-3559

2000 HD Sportster 883. Excellent condition, 3,865 original miles. \$3,700. 715-781-0745

8 in. x 61 ft. Westfield auger PTO drive. Like new. \$4,825 OBO and 7 in. x 54 ft. Westfield auger with electric motor. \$950 OBO.

8 in. x 48 ft. Feterl auger with electric drive – no motor. \$825 OBO. 651-503-5087

17 ft. aluminum extension ladder, rated 300 lbs. \$120. 612-423-4672

Weight Brackets to fit JD 20 to 40 series tractors. \$200. PEX 1/2" tubing, 400' plus. \$50. 715-781-2104

Solar Generator Trailer, 6kw continuous, 18kw peak, 9.6kw battery, 2.4kw solar panels, folds onto trailer, 10 minutes to set up and plug into 240V 30A generator plug. Use for continuous or emergency power. \$19,500. 651-829-0643

Two Anderson sliding doors – 81" x 36". Best offer. 715-426-3519

**SERVICES**

Sawmill sawing service. \$125/hour. 715-760-0907

Listings for goods and wanted items are free to publish; businesses and services are allowed two listings per calendar year. Listings will run on a "space available" basis and may be edited in print to fit space restrictions.

SCEC reserves the right to reject a listing or content. SCEC is not responsible for any misleading claims or other issues (financial or otherwise) that may occur during transactions.

**COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

Find our community calendar at [scecnet.net/calendar](http://scecnet.net/calendar)

**OCTOBER is NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH!**

Stay up-to-date with our October activities at [scecnet.net/co-op-month](http://scecnet.net/co-op-month)

**DrivEV Weekend!**

Each weekend in October, a different member will take home the SCEC 2018 Bolt EV and the all electric 2022 Ford Lightning!

**Winter Wear Collection**

Drop off new or gently used coats, snow pants, boots, mittens, gloves and hats in the bin that will be in our lobby beginning in October!

These items will be distributed by Basics for Local Kids, a charity that helps kids living in Pierce or St. Croix Counties ages newborn through 18 years old.

More information: [Basicsforlocalkids.org](http://Basicsforlocalkids.org) or 715-821-1623

Thurs., Oct. 26 • 5:30pm: **The Spooky Shuffle 2-ish Mile Fun Run** • Come dressed in your most ghoulish Garment. Western Wisconsin Health Community Trail, 1100 Bergslien St., Baldwin.

Sat., Oct. 28 • 11am-1pm: **Trunk or Treat Spooktacular** • New Richmond Area Centre, 425 E 5th St., New Richmond

Sat., Oct. 28 • 2-5pm: **Halloween at Homestead – Trick or Treat on the Bookworm Trail!** Free – all ages. Homestead Parklands, 550 Perch Lake Rd., Hudson.

Sat., Oct. 28 • 6-8pm: **Spooky Stories in the Woods** • Giezendanner School Forest, 2424 30th Ave., Woodville

Tues., Oct. 31 • 3-5pm: **Trick or Treat on Main Street** • Main Street in Baldwin

**Every Thursday 12:30-3:30 pm:**

Recycle your old electronics, ni-cad or rechargeable batteries, and CFL and fluorescent lights.

Learn more: [scecnet.net/recycling](http://scecnet.net/recycling)

**AD CONNECTIONS POLICY:**

Ad Connections listings/postings within St. Croix Electric Cooperative's (SCEC) *Energy Lifestyles Magazine* (monthly member newsletter) and online at [scecnet.net/ads](http://scecnet.net/ads) are for members and member businesses only.

Materials for Ad Connections are due on the **20th of each month** to appear in the next month's issue. Ads are posted online when received.





P.O. Box 160  
Hammond, WI 54015  
[www.scecn.net](http://www.scecn.net)

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## COLLECTING WINTER GEAR FOR BASICS FOR LOCAL KIDS!

Drop off new or gently used coats, snow pants, boots, mittens, gloves and hats in the bin in our lobby.

## OUR MISSION

To enhance the lives of our members and strengthen the communities where they live by providing superior electric and other valued services.

## October is National Co-Op Month

# ELECTRIC CO-OPS GROW FOR THE COMMUNITIES THEY SERVE

October is National Co-op Month, and SCEC is joining cooperatives across the U.S. to celebrate. Co-ops come in all shapes and sizes, but they each have a common goal: to provide goods or services for the members of the co-op.

As we celebrate Co-op Month, we're focusing on the ways "Co-ops Grow" for their members.

**Co-ops Grow Communities:** Co-ops help communities grow by promoting economic empowerment, fostering community engagement and supporting the unique needs of co-op members. "Concern for Community" is one of our core principles – and being community-focused is essential to everything we do. Operation Round Up was started to provide that support, along with volunteering in the communities where we can like sponsoring the community dinner in Baldwin once a year and participating in the Adopt a Highway Program.

**Co-ops Grow Together:** Co-ops are all about cooperation, not competition. That's why electric co-ops work together to share lessons learned, successful strategies and better ways to serve

our members. Last month SCEC worked with Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services to sponsor Powered by Electricity with UW-River Falls in an effort to provide members with information on all things electric. We also participate in ROPE where we send line workers to other co-ops to provide aid during outages, and in return, there is help available from other co-ops if we need it here. We're better when we grow together!

**Co-ops Grow Tomorrow's Leaders:** Electric co-ops serve as fertile ground for growing tomorrow's leaders through a variety of youth engagement programs. Whether through school demonstrations, community events like Build My Future or offering higher education scholarships, we're committed to providing opportunities for local youth to learn and thrive in our community and beyond.

**Co-ops Grow for You:** At SCEC, your satisfaction is our number one goal. It's why SCEC was formed 86 years ago to fulfill a uniquely local purpose. We've come a long way since then, and your needs continue to evolve. That's why we'll never stop growing for you!

