


Since 1940

WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* NEWS

November 2023

PIERCE PEDIN
COOPERATIVE SERVICES

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

PIES WITH CO-OP TIES

A WINNING STRATEGY

HOW TO INSULATE YOUR ATTIC HATCH

KIDS AND CRITTERS





Nate Boettcher,
President and CEO

IT'S EASY TO BE THANKFUL

As we wrap up the review of our survey feedback, it's important to reflect upon the many comments we received from our members stating their utmost appreciation for the PPCS employees. Whether it was for our operations crew or office staff, we received many words of encouragement and sincere appreciation for the work we do. Our operations group answers the call 24/7 to restore outages, our member relations staff helps ensure our members' needs are met, and our management team and office staff ensure that running the cooperative is done in a professional manner. We are truly blessed to have a great team here at PPCS. As I think about the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday, I am reminded of how fortunate I am to work so closely with our talented employees.

It's hard for me to believe that I started this journey with PPCS four years ago. I walked into a good situation left to me by my predecessor, Larry Dokkestul. Larry implemented many good policies and programs and turned over the reins with the cooperative being financially strong. Our strong financial performance allows us to deliver broadband to our members. It's also given us the ability to reinvest in our electric system, replacing and upgrading poles and wires.

I have learned over the past four years it takes an unbelievable commitment to believe in what we are doing. It's amazing to me how many times I

hear people start out by saying, "Well I am not against..." which is then followed up by a series of reasons why they are against something. This was evident when we started broadband. Despite those doubters, our team and contractors have worked hard over the past two years to build 800 miles of fiber and provide connections for up to 6,000 homes and businesses. And we are close to finishing the replacement of 10,000 meters. That is a reason to be thankful!

I am so thankful the PPCS board has believed in our employees. The board has provided us with the tools and resources to ensure our projects move forward. Another example of this will be seen when our 2 MW solar array comes on-line by the end of the year. Our board fully supported this project knowing that utilizing renewable energy is a positive and beneficial option for our members. Leadership is hard; it's easy to say no. I

am thankful for the leadership we have on the PPCS board. They do their homework, ask tough questions, and make tough decisions in the best interests of the cooperative.

Lastly, each year we return a portion of the cooperative margins to our members. The board decided earlier this year to begin retiring 3.33% of every member's total allocation amount from 2003–2023. The total amount returned to the membership will be nearly \$700,000. This significant amount demonstrates the power of being a cooperative member. When we have financially strong years, we return the excess margins back to our membership. We are truly thankful for the board's support in providing this back to our members.

Thank you for being a member! We hope you have a wonderful Thanksgiving and take time to enjoy quality time spent with family, friends, and loved ones.

YOU GET THE CREDIT!

PPCS will return almost \$700,000 to members in late November/early December.

The PPCS board has approved a 3.33% capital credit retirement of each member's total allocations from 2003-2023.

You're getting a return on your investment in the cooperative.

That's the Power of Co-op Membership!



SCHOLARSHIPS

PPCS has scholarships available for high school seniors graduating in spring 2024. Details, deadlines, and application instructions are available at www.piercepepin.coop, under My Community.

For more information, contact Charity Lubich at 715-273-4355, 800-924-2133, ext. 151, or clubich@piercepepin.coop.



Happy Thanksgiving!

Office closed: November 23 & 24

Report electric outages through SmartHub or call 800-924-5705.
Report internet outages by calling 866-307-5326

We wish everyone a safe and happy holiday!



POWERED BY ELECTRICITY... AND FUN!

There was fun for the whole family on Saturday, September 23, as PPCS teamed up with St. Croix Electric Cooperative, UW-River Falls Office of Sustainability, and Hope for Creation to host the third annual Powered by Electricity. The event included an electric vehicle showcase, solar panel displays from Energy Concepts, electric lawn equipment from Mean Green Machine, electric golf carts from Courtesy Auto, and Hudson Fleet Farm brought a wide variety of electric tools and equipment. Representatives were also on hand from Focus on Energy, the Beneficial Electrification Association, and EPA's electric school bus program. Just under 50 test drives were taken in a Chevrolet Bolt, Ford F150 Lightning, and Tesla Model 3. The electric vehicle showcase included every model of Tesla, Chevrolet Bolt and Bolt EUV, Ford F150 Lightning and Mustang Mach-E, Volvo C40, Kia EV6, Rivian truck and SUV, and Hyundai Kona. An electric tractor, motorcycle, and snow scooter were also on display. Thank you to everyone who came out and helped us celebrate everything electric!





LOAD MANAGEMENT TEST FOR DUAL-FUEL ELECTRIC HEATING

Wednesday, November 15

Load management receivers for dual-fuel electric heating systems will be tested on Wednesday, November 15, from 6:55 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. The test ensures our load management system is working properly before the winter heating season.

In-floor electric cable storage heating, electric thermal storage (ETS) room heaters, corn drying bins, and commercial heating applications will not be affected by this test.

Postcards will be mailed to load management program participants with dual-fuel heating systems prior to the test. If you have questions about the program, please contact David Chavie at 800-924-2133, ext. 133, or dchavie@piercepapin.coop.

TIME FOR TURKEY, TOUCHDOWNS, AND TECH

FEAST ON THE FUN OF THANKSGIVING

What's not to love about this holiday? Thanksgiving brings together treasured family and friends. Plus, it combines some of our favorite things—enjoying a turkey dinner with side dishes galore, streaming football games for hours, and sharing memorable moments via video calls and social media.

If your bandwidth is being gobbled up by the growing number of devices in your home, it's time for an internet upgrade.

**CALL 866-307-5326
NOW FOR FASTER
INTERNET**

**Happy Thanksgiving
to you and yours!**

Our office will be closed
November 23-24.



7725 U.S. HWY 10, Ellsworth, WI 54011
866-307-5326 • www.swiftcurrent.coop

Cornerstone Group © 2022

BROADBAND BYTES

Quick Updates from Fiber Freddie

Accounts Connected:

Internet: 2,718

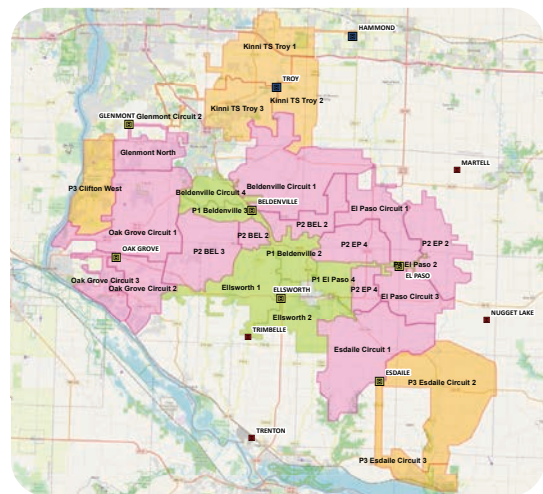
Phone: 481

Construction Update:

- **Phase 1** – Fully Open & Active. Still taking orders for fiber construction and service.
- **Phase 2** – Fully Open & Active. Still taking orders for fiber construction and service.
- **Phase 3** – Mainline construction is underway and progressing. Upcoming zones to open by late October/early November will be Troy 3 and Troy 1 (respectively). Property construction will begin shortly after that stretch of mainline is completed. Overall, home activations for Phase 3 are planned to begin as early as late fall 2023 and throughout winter 2023.



Important Note: For any service order taken after September 30, 2023, we cannot guarantee service and activation before year-end. We will strive to complete every service order in hand; however, due to the seasons changing and the volume of current service orders, we will prioritize those currently in queue. If the drop line is not placed prior to frost, your service order will be held until we can resume work again in spring 2024.





Five Ways to Safeguard Your Home This Winter

As the temperatures drop and the days grow shorter, we tend to create a warm and cozy haven at home. Unfortunately, as we see increased use of heating equipment, candles, and electrical items, the number of home fires tends to increase during winter months. Here are five ways you can safeguard your home for the winter season.

1. Ensure carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are working properly.

If your detectors are battery-operated, replace the batteries annually. Test the detectors once a month and give them a good dusting to ensure the sensors are clear of dirt and debris.

2. Inspect electrical cords. We depend on more cords during winter, whether for holiday lighting, extension cords, or portable heaters. Before using any corded items, double-check to make sure cords aren't frayed or cracked. If you use portable space heaters, remember to keep them at least 3 feet away from flammable items. Use models that include an auto shut-off feature and overheat protection. Never plug a space heater into a power strip. Speaking of power strips...

3. Avoid overloading electrical outlets and power strips. When overloaded with electrical items, outlets and power strips can overheat and catch fire. If you use power strips for multiple devices, make sure the strip can handle the electrical load. Look for power strips that include surge protection.

4. Clean the fireplace to improve safety and efficiency. There's nothing better than a warm fire on a chilly night, but it's important to maintain your fireplace for safety. As wood burns, a sticky substance known as creosote builds up in the chimney. When creosote buildup becomes too thick, a chimney fire can ignite. The chimney should be cleaned at least once a year to reduce fire risks. Regular cleaning also improves airflow and limits the amount of carbon



Ryan is making sure his sons, Preston (left), Mason (middle), and Jameson, understand fire safety from an early age.

monoxide that seeps indoors.

5. Practice safety in the kitchen.

As we spend more time in the kitchen during the holiday season, be mindful of potential fire hazards. Never leave food that's cooking on the stovetop unattended. Clean and remove spilled foods from cooking surfaces and be mindful of where you place flammable items like dish towels.

More safety tips are available at SafeElectricity.org.

NEED HELP WITH YOUR ENERGY BILL?

Our Commitment to Community program offers additional help to PPCS members who qualify for energy assistance through the county where they reside. Program assistance is provided on a first come, first served basis so don't delay if you need help. To get started, contact your county's Department of Human Services.


Pierce, Pepin & St. Croix Counties 715-265-4271

Buffalo County..... 608-685-4412

Meeting Your Payment Obligation




If you are having trouble paying your monthly energy bill, please contact us. We are happy to work with you, but it is your responsibility to contact our office to set up a payment agreement.

PIERCE PEPIN COOPERATIVE SERVICES

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

W7725 U.S. Highway 10, P.O. Box 420
Ellsworth, WI 54011-0420
715-273-4355 • 800-924-2133

info@piercepepin.coop • www.piercepepin.coop

Follow us on Facebook, X, and Instagram   

Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Power Outages and Emergencies: 800-927-5705

Nate Boettcher, President & CEO

Board of Directors

District 1.....Gerald Drier

District 2.....Edward Hass

District 3.....Brian Berg

District 4.....John Parkes

District 5.....Ann Young

District 6.....Ginny Huber, secretary/treasurer

District 7.....Roger Wiff, chairman

District 8.....Brian Bergseng, vice chairman

District 9.....Daniel Reis