

Since 1940

# WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* NEWS

July 2024

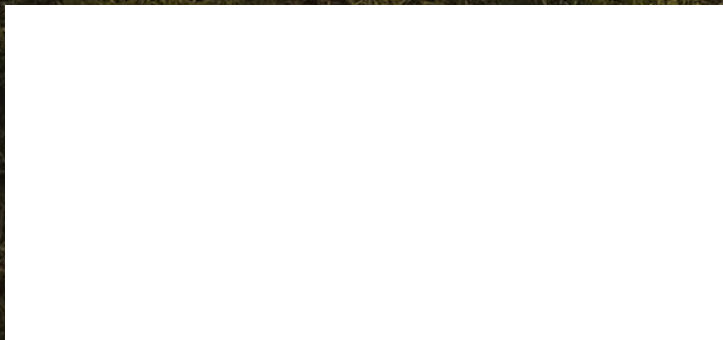


## YOU'LL **DIG** THESE DESTINATIONS

**RESILIENT**

**SIGNS YOUR HVAC IS IN TROUBLE**

**KIDS AND CRITTERS**







# BEAT THE SUMMER PEAK

## Shift for Savings Ideas

Nate Boettcher, President and CEO

**A**s we approach the peak of summer, it's an opportune moment to revisit our "Shift for Savings" program, a voluntary initiative that has been in place for the past few years. This program empowers our members to take control of their energy usage by shifting it away from critical peak periods. Earlier this year, we introduced residential demand rates designed to encourage our members to reduce their energy demand. During the summer, this critical period is between 2 and 8 p.m.

Here are a few simple and effective tips for reducing summer energy demand during these critical peak periods. Implementing these can significantly impact your energy consumption.

**A. BBQ** – What better way to embrace summer than by firing up the barbecue grill, smokers, or even griddles? These outdoor cooking appliances, powered by pellets, propane, or natural gas, are not only a fun way to cook but also a practical way to reduce your energy use. It's a perfect time to revisit your favorite BBQ recipes or explore new ones online that make the most of the outdoor season. You can even prepare meals in advance for the entire week and simply reheat them.

**B. Air Conditioning** – When energy demand is high, it generally happens at the same time when members want to use their air conditioning. There are a couple of ways to help reduce the demand during those critical hours. Consider pre-cooling your home by lowering the thermostat ahead of the peak times and then bumping it up by 3 to 5 degrees above your normal temperature. For example, if you normally set your thermostat at 72 degrees, consider pre-cooling ahead of the 2 to 8 p.m. window by setting it to 65 degrees. Then, set your thermostat to 75 to 77 degrees during the critical peak period. Close your blinds or curtains and limit the opening of outside doors. This will allow your AC unit to take a break for a while but also give you some relief if the temperature in your home continues to rise.

**C. Go For a Swim/Ice Cream** – While it may not be healthy to go for ice cream every day during the summer, you can still use this as an excuse to leave the house. This also might be a good time to run errands, allowing you to leave the house and reduce your usage during these critical peak periods. Consider running to the grocery store, stopping by the library, or even getting outdoors. Turn off lights and the AC to help reduce energy while you are away.

**D. Reduce Other Appliances** – Consider reducing or unplugging devices during the critical peak period. For instance, hold off on doing laundry until later in the evening. Run the dishwasher on a delayed cycle. Turn off lights or unplug items that may use energy that may not be needed, such as phone chargers, computer equipment, or other energy-consuming items. Use Smart Surge Strips to turn multiple appliances on and off.

We encourage these changes to help reduce your electricity consumption and demand during these critical peak periods. We recognize that many people rely on having electricity on demand no matter what time of day or what happens with electricity prices.

We are moving into a new world in which, during critical peak periods, the reliability of energy and supply may not be constant. And many times, when we discuss these concepts, we immediately receive feedback

that questions the need for electric vehicles. Remember that most electric vehicles will and can charge at night when energy demand is much lower. Soon, many EVs will be able to help support energy demand by providing the battery as a grid asset and either providing energy to the home or back to the grid. These energy-consuming vehicles will be energy-delivering assets.

Help us control costs, help save you money, and, most importantly, ensure that we all do our part to help manage the electric grid by Shifting for Savings.

Our office will be closed on July 4 and 5 as we allow our employees to have an extended holiday weekend. We hope you have a great Fourth of July.

### Reduce Your Use – Critical Peak Period 2 to 8 p.m.

## SHIFT for Savings

Reduce your energy use  
between 2 and 8 PM.

With your help, we can  
lower demand, keep rates  
stable, and decrease  
stress on the electric grid.



## HAVE YOU MISPLACED SOME TREASURE?

PPCS is searching for members with unclaimed capital credit (dividend) checks issued in 2019. Capital credits are a member's share of the cooperative's margins (profits) for a year in which revenues exceeded expenses. Capital credit refunds are proportionate to the member's share of electrical costs and

purchases for that year. The PPCS board of directors approves refunds of capital credits based on the cooperative's financial health. Notifying PPCS of changes to your mailing address is important.

A list of members we hope to locate is included on our website, [www.piercepepin.coop](http://www.piercepepin.coop), under My Co-op > Capital Credits. A notice of forfeiture of funds was also published in the June 6, 2024, edition of *The Journal*, Ellsworth. A current address is needed to locate these members and refund their capital credits.

Is your name on this list? Do you know where we can locate these people or their heirs if they are deceased? If you recognize anyone on the list, please con-



tact us at 715-273-4355, 800-924-2133, or [info@piercepepin.coop](mailto:info@piercepepin.coop) and provide the member's name and current address.

If these members are not located by August 31, 2024, the unclaimed funds will be forfeited to the Federated Youth Foundation and used by the cooperative for educational or charitable purposes as directed by our bylaws.

## PPCS WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & GROWTH

Dave French joined Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services (PPCS) on May 28 as its new director of marketing and growth. French is a longtime



Prescott community member and has extensive marketing experience with several industry-leading companies. French joins PPCS at a critical time as the cooperative continues to build out its broadband subsidiary SwiftCurrent Connect, enhances its communications, and broadens its energy services business. French will lead the marketing, communications, and growth strategies, participate in community events, and engage with the cooperative's member-owners to ensure the cooperative meets their needs.

Join us!  
**Music in the Park**  
Memorial Park Bandshell  
Durand, WI  
July 17 from 6 to 9 PM  
**Giveaways - Prize Drawings**  
*This is a member-focused event. Stop at our table and register to be entered in our drawing for three \$100 bill credits to be given away in December 2024.*  
Music in the park is sponsored by Durand Improvement Group.  
PIERCE PEPIN COOPERATIVE SERVICES  
SWIFTCURRENT CONNECT BROADBAND POWERED BY PPCS



## SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE

Help local students get the supplies they need for success in school

**NOW THRU AUGUST 2ND**

Drop off in the PPCS lobby

## POLE TESTING BEGINS IN JULY

PPCS provides you with safe, reliable electricity. Although some things interfere—things beyond our control, like lightning, high winds, tornadoes, ice, and snowstorms—we work hard to prevent blinks and power outages. PPCS has contracted with Utili-Tech Solutions to do pole testing to help maintain the integrity of the overhead infrastructure. Pole testing will include the towns of Diamond Bluff and Trenton. Call our operations department at 800-924-2133 if you have any questions.





# BROADBAND BYTES

*Quick Updates from Fiber Freddie*



**Connected Accounts:**

3294 Internet, 712 Voice

**Construction Update:** Phase 4 construction is underway in Elmwood, Pleasant Valley, and southeast Pierce County

Sign up for SwiftCurrent Connect today at [www.swiftcurrent.coop](http://www.swiftcurrent.coop).

## CONGRATULATIONS

to our 2024 scholarship recipients!

Each student received a \$1,000 scholarship based on an essay contest. Scholarships are funded through unclaimed capital credits.



Lander Levers



Kayla Kressin



Rebecca Dendinger

# CAN'T DECIDE WHERE TO GO WITH STREAMING?



## OUR STREAMNOW WEBSITE HELPS YOU NAVIGATE THROUGH THE OPTIONS.

For example, if there are certain live TV channels you can't live without, check out StreamNow's side-by-side comparison chart. It shows at a glance which of these streaming services carry which channels—and their monthly prices—so you can take the right route for you:

- YouTube TV
- DIRECTV STREAM
- Hulu + Live TV
- Fubo
- Sling Blue
- Sling Orange
- Philo
- Frndly TV
- Paramount+
- Peacock

VISIT [gostreamnow.com/swiftcurrent](http://gostreamnow.com/swiftcurrent)



Comerstone Group © 2024

## Happy Fourth of July!



**Office closed:  
July 4 and 5**

Report electric outages through SmartHub or call 800-927-5705.

Report internet issues by calling 866-307-5326.



## GET SMART ABOUT HOME LIGHTING

Gone are the days when a simple flip of the switch was the only way to illuminate our homes. While we still have this tried-and-true option, we've entered a new era of innovative and intelligent technologies, including smart lighting. Smart lighting connects to Wi-Fi and offers an array of cutting-edge functionality and convenience. Let's look at the main benefits of smart lighting options.

Smart lighting is energy efficient. Most smart bulbs utilize LED technology, which is much more efficient than traditional incandescent lighting. Additionally, smart lighting gives you more control over how and when you light your home, resulting in less energy used for lighting.

Smart lighting provides convenience and control. Most smart bulbs can be controlled from an app on your smartphone or paired with your voice assistant, like Amazon Alexa. You can conveniently control lighting settings anywhere in your home or when you're away. Whether you want to set a lighting schedule or adjust brightness levels,

these smart options offer effortless control from the comfort of anywhere!

Smart options enable you to personalize home lighting. Bright, warm, purple, green—whatever mood you want to create, smart lighting can help. For a more traditional look, try dimmable white bulbs. To create the perfect ambiance for movie night, look for bulbs that can be adjusted for various vibrant colors. The possibilities are endless.

While smart lighting offers convenience and control, keep in mind that your wall light switch will need to stay “on” to control the smart bulb from your phone or via voice command. To use a smart bulb, the wall switch it's connected to must be “on,” so the bulb receives power, which enables it to connect to a Wi-Fi network.

Consider a smart light switch if you need additional options to operate the lights. Today's smart switches tend to play nicely with smart bulbs. If you

want to control your smart bulbs with a physical switch (in addition to using your phone and voice commands), look for smart switches with a built-in feature that allows both. Many smart light switches also include motion detectors.

If you're new to smart home tech and looking to start small, try a smart bulb in a high-traffic area of your home. It's also worth noting that smart plugs are a great starter option and allow convenient control of lamps or other lighting fixtures plugged into a wall outlet. Smart plugs are inexpensive and plug into your existing outlet. Electrical items connected to the smart plug can be controlled from a smartphone app like smart bulbs.

Whether you're looking for more convenience, colorful options, or better ways to manage energy use, smart lighting can provide multiple benefits. Determine which smart lighting features are most important for your needs, then start shopping!

### TIPS FOR INTEGRATING SMART HOME TECH

If you're new to smart home technologies, keep the following tips in mind as you explore home automation options.

- 1. Define goals.** Determine the areas in your home you want to make smart, like lighting, security and entertainment systems.
- 2. Choose compatible devices.** A smart hub can make integration easier with a central device to control multiple smart technologies.
- 3. Check Wi-Fi strength.** Smart home technologies require a stable internet connection to function properly, so consider factors like router placement and signal strength.
- 4. Prioritize security.** Set strong, unique passwords for your Wi-Fi network, set devices to update automatically and limit personal data collection.



**Nate Boettcher, President & CEO**  
**Liz Gunderson, Editor**

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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**