

POWERLINES

POLK-BURNETT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE | July 2019



Keeping lights on, making a difference, NO rate increase, plus food and prizes make a great annual meeting!

by General Manager Steve Stroshane and Board President Ed Gullickson

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR OUR CO-OP MEMBERS! On June 7, Polk-Burnett hosted its 81st Annual Meeting and Member Appreciation Open House. The day began with fun for all ages, including bucket truck rides, electricity experiments, selfies with Solar Sam and linemen gear, plus root beer floats, BBQ sliders, donuts, kettle corn and cheese curds from local food trucks. All who attended were entered into a drawing for a TV, iPad and 10 \$50 electric bill credits. Members received insulated tote bags and ice scrapers, and kids received \$5 DQ cards and co-op coloring books. Thank you to the **650 members** and guests who attended.

81st Annual Meeting: General Manager Steve Stroshane and Board President Ed Gullickson reported that the state of the cooperative remains strong: Polk-Burnett delivered reliable power with efficiency and extraordinary service to **more than 20,000 electric co-op members**, according to our mission. Members heard financial and power quality updates, as well as the status of renewables on the system and how the co-op is making a positive difference in our community.

Making a Difference: Do you know your co-op delivers more than reliable power? Community service is one of Polk-Burnett's core values and we're proud to demonstrate the cooperative difference with **\$57,500 in scholarships** to the Class of 2019 and **\$57,000 in Operation Round Up grants** to 72 local nonprofits in 2018. Beyond financial support, co-op employees performed 680 hours of community service last year.

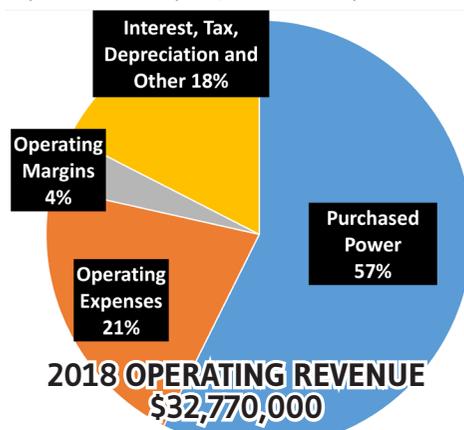
Renewable Energy: We are also making a difference by increasing renewables for co-op members. Each year, our power provider, Dairyland Power Cooperative, adds more solar and wind to reduce carbon emissions. At present, **about 20%** of the energy that flows into our distribution system is renewable energy. Polk-Burnett also offers rebates for members who install **residential wind and solar**, and you can purchase renewable energy blocks through our **Evergreen** program. In addition, our 10-acre **SunTuria Solar** array in Centuria is generating renewable power for our membership; you can view solar energy output on polkburnett.com.

99.97% Reliable: No matter how your electricity is generated, our number one goal is to keep the lights on for you! In 2018, we invested **\$3.5 million** to upgrade and maintain a reliable electric system. The same is planned for 2019. This investment resulted in **less than one hour without power** per member per year, which puts us in the **top 25%** of co-ops nationwide for reliability!

Smart Money Management: **57¢ of every dollar** we collect goes to Dairyland Power to *purchase* electricity for you; just 21¢ pays for operating expenses to *deliver* electricity to your home, *see breakdown right*. We're working to keep expenses down, and are happy to report that **rates will not go up in 2019**. We have the capacity to pay debt, invest in a reliable grid and return Capital Credits to you.

Giving Money Back: Polk-Burnett returned **\$1,225,000 in Capital Credits** to members last year. That's a direct benefit of your co-op membership! In 2018, members also received **\$146,664 in EnergySense** rebates and **saved 1 million kWh of electricity** as a result of our EnergySense program. If you want to upgrade your home for comfort and energy efficiency, we can help!

These are just a few highlights from our annual meeting. We invite you to read Powerlines, like us on Facebook and Twitter, and visit our website to stay in touch. Thank you for your membership!



2018 financial report and audit are on polkburnett.com

Traynor, Owens and Metro re-elected to co-op board

Results of Polk-Burnett's board election in Districts 4, 5 and 6 were announced at the annual meeting June 7.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR VOTE: Voter participation was 17.66% with 997 ballots received from 5,647 eligible voters. Members voted by mail (883) and online (114).

Re-elected to serve three-year terms are L-R: Jeff Traynor, Balsam Lake, District 5; Wilfred Owens, Frederic, District 6, and Joe Metro, Balsam Lake, District 4.



Propane prebuy contracts available late July



- ✓ Prebuy contracts lock in a price on a fixed number of gallons.
- ✓ Minimum prebuy purchase is 300 gallons with payment due August 23.
- ✓ If contracting isn't an option, sign up for our budget plan by August 23.

800-421-0283, ext. 378 or 411
polkburnett.com



IN 2018, CO-OP MEMBERS RECEIVED \$146,664 IN REBATES AND SAVED 1 MILLION KWHs OF ENERGY! 2019 REBATES AVAILABLE NOW.

Be prepared for summer storms and power outages

Polk-Burnett works year round to strengthen its system and prevent power outages, but summer storms are always a threat. Lightning and strong winds can damage power lines and cause power outages.

If your lights go out this summer:

1. Check circuit breakers, fuses and the neighbors.
2. Report outages on SmartHub or 800-421-0283.
3. Keep away from fallen power lines, and trees and branches near lines. Report these hazards.
4. Crews first respond to hazards, substations and major distribution lines, followed by smaller tap lines and individual service lines.

Enroll to receive outage texts on polkburnett.com:

- You'll know:
1. When the power goes out at your location.
 2. Estimated time of restoration, whenever possible.
 3. When the power is restored.
 4. The cause of the outage, whenever possible.

OUTAGE MAP

KEEPS YOU INFORMED WHEN THE LIGHTS GO OUT

- ✓ See outage location.
- ✓ If help has been dispatched.
- ✓ How many affected.
- ✓ Estimated restoration time.

VIEW OUTAGE MAP ON:
polkburnett.com | [SmartHub](#)
[Facebook.com/polkburnett](https://www.facebook.com/polkburnett)



It's dangerous to build or landscape near utilities

Warning! Gardens, landscaping, decks, fences and buildings near underground transformer boxes, power poles and other utility equipment are a safety hazard.



- ✓ Life-threatening contact with high-voltage equipment can occur when landscaping and structures are too close to electrical equipment.
- ✓ Obstructions limit access for linemen working to keep the power on at your home or business. Co-op crews need access to utility equipment to perform routine maintenance and emergency repairs.
- ✓ Decks, fences, dog kennels, structures and landscaping built too close to utility equipment could be damaged when crews and trucks need access to work on electrical equipment.

All structures and landscaping are required to be a safe distance from utilities. Any damage to structures or landscaping built too close to electric utilities is the responsibility of the property owner. For your safety, keep away from electrical equipment, and please prevent children from playing near utilities. Thank you!



Do the Summer Shift and help Beat the Peak



DO THE SUMMER SHIFT: Reduce electricity when demand and price peak, weekdays, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

BEAT THE PEAK: Enroll to receive Beat the Peak alerts by phone, email or text when energy demand and price are high. Then, conserve energy during this time to help the co-op cut cost and carbon.

THANK YOU: Every little bit helps! When you reduce electricity during peak times, you reduce the need for power generation, which keeps energy costs down and reduces carbon emissions for a cleaner world!

Six summer energy savers for co-op members

- ☀️ Raise your thermostat 4 degrees in the summer. Tip: Use a ceiling fan to keep cool and you can increase your thermostat 4 degrees with no change in comfort.
- ☀️ Wash laundry and dishes before or after peak times, (weekdays 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.) and wash only full loads.
- ☀️ Shut off lights and electronics.
- ☀️ Use solar-powered clothes line to dry clothes.
- ☀️ Replace incandescent bulbs with LEDs; those old bulbs waste energy and generate unwanted heat!
- ☀️ Avoid watering outside and running your well during peak times.

Call to improve energy efficiency and comfort in your home: you'll lower your bill and help the environment!

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When it's warm out, avoid using the oven. Try cooking on the stove, using the microwave or grilling outside instead.

Source: energy.gov



IF YOU RECEIVE AN EMAIL SURVEY, WE APPRECIATE YOUR FEEDBACK TO HELP US IMPROVE.

All members who submit a survey will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 bill credit.

Polk-Burnett is your local Touchstone Energy Cooperative. Reliable power with efficiency and extraordinary service.

Like us on Facebook. Follow us on Twitter.

800-421-0283 • polkburnett.com



Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer | Member Owned | Community Focused



A Touchstone Energy Cooperative