



Shane L. Larson,  
Chief Executive Officer

# More Power to You Yes, spring is on the way, but for now, don't forget to make 'winter safety' a priority



*Also, a closer look at a Broadband Access Study taking place in Rock County*

The trials and tribulations of winter aren't quite over just yet. The month of February can be rough—often cold, snowy, and icy. Just look back to last year, when in early February there was a deep freeze that gripped a large portion of our nation as bitter cold temperatures stretched from Wisconsin all the way down to Texas, causing all kinds of havoc.

So, as winter continues to churn and cause mischief, you may see our line crews on the road as they look out for damage or potential problems with overhead lines. This is part of our normal routine to ensure that our distribution lines are in good working order. If you see our crews on the roadway, please slow down and keep a safe distance while passing them. They are working to keep our electric distribution system safe and reliable.



Pictured above, a Rock Energy crew works on a power line following a winter storm in Rockton, IL.

Also, as a reminder I ask each of you to make the necessary preparations to stay safe. Listen for emergency weather information and alerts and prepare your home for the possibility of blizzard conditions. Gather up the necessary supplies in case of a prolonged outage. Extra batteries, blankets, bottled water, and nonperishable food are essential emergency supplies. And keep an emergency supply kit in your car in case you become stranded on the road. Having jumper cables, sand or kitty litter, a flashlight, blankets, bottled water, and snacks in your car during the winter is a smart way to travel.

And, of course, please always remember to be attentive on the road as you are driving, especially in icy/snowy conditions. On page 18 in this issue, you will find an article about what to do if you run into a power pole. Knowing what to do in a critical situation such as this could ultimately save your life.

Looking forward just a bit (no, winter won't last forever), as the construction and maintenance of our system begins in the spring, I would again encourage all of our members to be courteous and respectful to our line crews and contractors as they work on our system.

If you have any questions about the work being done, do not hesitate to contact our office to get answers. We remain dedicated to working on programs and services that offer the best value to the membership.

## ROCK COUNTY BROADBAND STUDY

While safety should certainly always be top-of-mind during the frigid, snowy and blustery months of our Wisconsin winters, often times we simply opt to avoid the icy roads and bone-chilling temps, and choose to stay inside. And, of course, when in the comfort of our own homes, we all want reliable internet connectivity. Unfortunately, for some (especially in rural areas), internet access can be spotty, or sometimes just simply not available. Well, the Rock County Development Agency is hoping to change that.

In cooperation with the Madison Region Economic Partnership group, a study of internet speeds in Rock County is being conducted, and Rock Energy members are being asked to take part in the initiative. Details about the study and how Rock Energy members can participate are on page 18 in this month's issue. Results from the study will help to pursue better broadband infrastructure in certain areas.

If you can help by participating in the study, it would be greatly appreciated!



# ENERGY THEFT/TAMPERING IS A CRIME

## IT'S NOT WORTH THE RISK

Someone illegally hooks into a power supply, hooks up a line that has been disconnected, or tampers with a meter to avoid recording electricity usage. Legitimate electricity consumers do not engage in these behaviors; however, even though the impact of electricity theft is often unrecognized, these illegal activities do occur.

Most electrical theft crimes occur through meter tampering, bypassing meters, and tapping power lines. Other less frequent crimes include tapping into neighboring premises, using illegal lines after disconnection, self-reconnection without consent, and electrifying fences. Electricity theft is a crime and is punishable by law.

Meter tampering, mentioned above, is also dangerous and puts our members and Rock Energy employees at great risk.

### What constitutes meter tampering?

- Adjusting anything on the meter
- Obstructing the meter
- Damaging the meter pedestal
- Repositioning the meter
- Breaking the meter seal
- Cutting a meter lock
- Flipping the Rock Energy breaker switch on (if it is off)
- Removing the meter from its mount for any purpose
- Bypassing a meter through any means



**Do NOT  
remove the  
meter tag.**



*If you suspect there is anything wrong with your Rock Energy meter or someone is attempting to steal electricity in any way, please call us immediately at (866) 752-4550.*

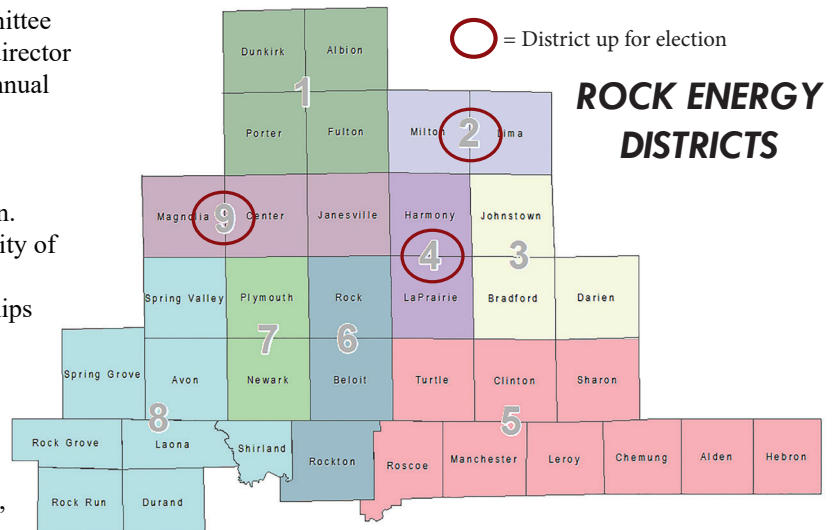
# REC DIRECTOR NOMINATIONS OPEN

The Rock Energy Cooperative Nominating Committee will be selecting candidates to run for board of director positions that will be on the ballot at the 2022 annual meeting, to be held Sept. 19, 2022.

### DISTRICTS UP FOR ELECTION:

- **District 2:** Lima and Milton townships in Wisconsin.
- **District 4:** Harmony and LaPrairie townships and city of Janesville in Wisconsin.
- **District 9:** Center, Janesville, and Magnolia townships in Wisconsin.

Active members who are interested in running for a position on the REC Board of Directors must permanently reside in one of the areas up for election and meet all other qualifications. For more information, please contact the co-op at 866-752-4550, or send an e-mail to [questions@rock.coop](mailto:questions@rock.coop).



**Candidate Submission Deadline: APRIL 1, 2022**

# THE FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT!

**Rock Energy recently caught up with Megan Kreier (a 2018 Milton High School graduate and a Rock Energy Scholarship winner) to see what she's up to now and what she has planned for the future.**

## MEGAN KREIER

**2018 REC Scholarship Winner**

**HOMETOWN: Milton, WI**

**COLLEGE: Marquette University Law School**



Megan Kreier graduated from Milton High School in 2018, where she excelled in academics and music. Megan was also a recipient of the Rock Energy scholarship that year.

Rock Energy recently caught up with Megan to see how things were coming along for her post high school.

Megan is currently attending Marquette University Law School in Milwaukee, WI. She plans on graduating law school in May of 2024. Megan has already earned a bachelor's degree, and is currently working part-time at Marquette University Law School in the Office of Public Service. She said that after graduating, she would like to clerk for a federal judge, or attain a position in a private law firm.

## ABOUT THE REC SCHOLARSHIP

Rock Energy Cooperative has been offering scholarships to graduating high school seniors who enroll at an accredited school since 1989. Students whose parents or guardians are active members of REC are eligible. In other words, students can apply if their household receives electricity or natural gas from the co-op. Over the years, Rock Energy has awarded more than \$142,000 in financial aid to deserving students.



**2018 Rock Energy Scholarship recipient Megan Kreier is currently pursuing a degree at Marquette University Law School. Eckstein Hall (pictured above) is known as one of the top law school facilities in the nation.**

## Megan's advice to HS students considering college after graduation:

*"Dream big and don't be scared! You may not have an answer for everything and you may change your mind several times, that's okay. There are so many resources available to students, so don't be afraid to use them. Also, get involved and try new things. You may surprise yourself on what you become passionate about."*

## GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

"I definitely think I will be helping members of the community in my profession. A career in law will allow me to fight for the individual rights of every citizen, ensuring that their voices and concerns are heard. As I am experiencing with my pro bono work, it is extremely satisfying to be able to help people in the community who otherwise may not have access to a lawyer to assist them"

## THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

"My college experience has been amazing. I believe WLC prepared me to take on law school, especially Dr. Jason Badura," Megan said. "I believe Marquette University Law School is and will continue to prepare me for the future as a lawyer. One of the most valuable things I learned in college is to never give up. There will be days that are harder than others and times when you feel completely overwhelmed, but you have to believe in yourself and push through the tough times to reach your dreams. It is also really important to reach out to your professors. They want you to succeed!"

## LOOKING AHEAD

"I would like to either have my own law firm, be a partner in an existing law firm, or work for the state or federal government," Megan said. "Through Marquette Law School, I have the opportunity to participate in pro bono, where I work with licensed attorneys who offer their services to members of the community at no charge. This experience allows me to use the skills and knowledge I am learning, and see how it applies to real people and real situations."

# IF YOU CRASH INTO A POWER POLE... DO YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO?



**1**

**Stay in the car if you're in an accident with a power pole.**

**2**

**Warn those who try to come near your car to help that they must stay far away.**

**3**

**Call 911 for help, and wait until a professional from the electric utility tells you it is safe to leave the car.**

*The exception to these rules is if your car is on fire. In that case, jump clear of the vehicle without touching it and the ground at the same time. Then hop away with feet together. This way there will not be a voltage difference between your two feet, which would give electricity the chance to flow through your body.*

## Broadband study could lead way for future internet projects in Rock County

Rock County businesses and economic development groups are currently participating in a regional broadband study to determine what steps need to be taken in the coming years to improve internet access for private use and business services. Data collected from this study will help with identifying existing broadband speeds in the county, while highlighting areas with limited or no access.

According to Rock County Economic Development Manager James Otterstein, the Rock County Development Agency has reached out to Rock County businesses to partake in the study of broadband internet speeds. The need for the study comes from previous data collections by state and federal officials was not current or accurate.

Otterstein recently reached out to Rock Energy Cooperative about the initiative as well, asking for its Wisconsin members to participate in the internet speed test study, which was developed by the Madison Region Economic Partnership group.

The test shows participants their current internet speed while collecting necessary data to pursue better broadband infrastructure in the area.

Data for the study will be collected through April of this year, with the potential for an extension if further participation is needed.

The speed test does not use tracking cookies; and no personal data will be stored. Participants are asked to make sure that no one at the participant house or business is streaming or gaming while taking the speed test. Additionally, participants are asked to make sure their work/school Virtual Private Network (VPN) is turned off or deactivated. From the test web site, data about your broadband speed is collected to help your community in efforts to get grants and other support to improve broadband for your community.

**To participate in the study, visit:**

[www.madisonregion.org/industry-and-innovation/broadband/](http://www.madisonregion.org/industry-and-innovation/broadband/)



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**ROCK ENERGY  
COOPERATIVE**  
Empowering Members Since 1936