



Powering your life with all available resources

by General Manager Steve Stroshane

Our number one priority is delivering safe, reliable electricity to meet the needs of our members and community. Last month, our newsletter explained the coordinated system of grid power players who work together to keep your lights on. In most cases, it begins with power generation by Dairyland Power Cooperative, our wholesale power provider. Once electricity is produced, it travels long distances across high-voltage transmission lines to reach local substations. That's where we come in. Polk-Burnett delivers electricity from the substations, across local distribution power lines, to your homes, farms and businesses. New for members is local solar, above is the ribbon cutting at Viola Solar, which began generating power in December 2025.

This month, I'd like to share more about how your power is generated and why a balanced energy mix is important.

Reliable Energy

A balanced energy mix means using all available energy resources—including coal, natural gas, nuclear and renewables—to produce electricity. Instead of relying on one single resource, our power providers use a variety of resources to meet energy needs at all times of the day and year. Different energy sources perform differently in different conditions. A balanced mix ensures that electricity is available when you need it.

For example, solar and wind energy are an important and growing part of our power supply, but they are intermittent and depend on the sun to shine and the wind to blow.

Because renewable energy output varies with weather and time of day, we need dispatchable resources to keep the grid reliable.

Dispatchable resources are most often natural gas power plants; they can be turned on or adjusted as needed to maintain reliability.

Dairyland Power Cooperative owns and operates five natural gas plants with a generation capacity of 1,800 MW. Three of the five were added to their generation fleet in 2025-26. Energy from natural gas plants feeds into the power grid to support renewables, sustainability and reliability.

Traditional *baseload* power refers to generation resources like coal and nuclear plants that run continuously, 24/7, to meet electricity demand on the power grid. Dairyland's J.P. Madgett Station is a 387-MW coal plant in Alma, WI. Baseload power plants produce steady, reliable energy around the clock, but cannot be ramped up or down quickly.

Dairyland is also exploring small modular reactors (SMRs) as a potential option for the future. SMRs generate zero-carbon electricity using nuclear fission to create heat and power steam turbines. While commercial use is most likely a decade away, SMR development is supported by the power sector, private industry and government agencies. There is also public support for nuclear energy in America.

Today, your power supply includes all available resources—baseload, dispatchable and renewables. Some are steady and some help fill the gaps. Reliability means having enough power available every moment of the day.



Affordable Energy

A balanced energy mix goes beyond reliability. It also helps manage energy costs by using lower-cost resources when available. Overreliance on any single resource exposes Polk-Burnett and our members to price volatility on the energy market, which is influenced by weather, fuel costs and grid limitations (such as transmission line congestion, maintenance outages at power plants or prioritizing natural gas for residential heating).

Clean and Sustainable Energy

With today's technology, renewable energy is expanding locally and nationally, reducing carbon emissions over time while preserving reliability with baseload and dispatchable sources. In addition to utility-scale solar and wind, Dairyland's resource portfolio includes three hydroelectric stations and two landfill-gas plants.

Here in Polk-Burnett's service area, four local solar arrays provide clean power, as well as operational and financial benefits for co-op members.

 **SunTuria Solar**, Centuria, 2017
 **Luck Solar**, Luck, 2025

 **Georgetown Solar**, Balsam Lake, 2023
 **Viola Solar**, Webster, 2025

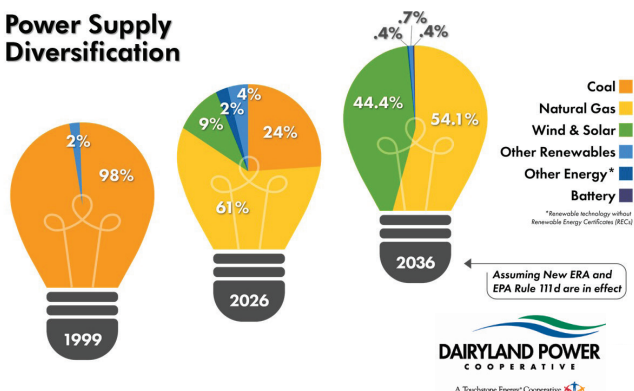
Investing in local solar helps us become less reliant on the energy market and strengthens grid reliability for co-op members.

Pictured above: In May, we dedicated Viola Solar, the first utility-scale solar in Burnett County. The 2.5 MW array is located just north of Highway 70 between Siren and Hertel. The 13-acre site has 5,200 panels that operate on a tracking system to follow the path of the sun. Solar output feeds into Polk-Burnett's distribution system at nearby Hertel Substation to benefit co-op members. Viola Solar was developed by Madison-based OneEnergy Renewables. Polk-Burnett will purchase the energy at a fixed rate for 30 years. The dual-purpose space provides energy for about 600 homes, as well as acres of restored pasture and prairie ecosystem.

Viola Solar generates local power to benefit co-op members. The array relieves high summer demand at Hertel Substation and offsets power market costs.

A balanced energy strategy by both Dairyland Power Cooperative and Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative delivers electricity that is reliable, affordable and sustainable.

Power Supply Diversification



Be prepared for summer storms and power outages



We work hard to prevent outages, but summer storms are always a threat. If your power goes out:

- ▶ Check circuit breakers, fuses and the neighbors.
- ▶ Report outages 24/7 on SmartHub or 800-421-0283.
- ▶ View Outage Map on polkburnett.com and Facebook for major outages.
- ▶ Keep away from fallen power lines, and trees and branches on lines. Report these hazards.



If we have your cell number on file, we'll send you a text alert with outage information, including cause and estimated restoration time when possible. Scan QR code to update your cell number >

Our goal is to restore your power quickly and safely, while keeping you informed.

Why it's good to see co-op workers on your property

Polk-Burnett employees and contractors work throughout our service territory in the rights-of-way and easements, and across your private property and driveways. Our proactive work ensures reliable power for you and your neighbors, and that means we must cross your property from time to time. You may see us:



- Making routine repairs
- Replacing meters
- Trimming trees and brush
- Restoring power outages
- Locating buried utilities
- Upgrading poles, wires, transformers and equipment
- Inspecting lines, power poles, transformer boxes and equipment

All field work, except emergency power restoration, is conducted during normal working hours, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Every effort is made to avoid damage and unnecessary intrusion. If you have concerns, contact us at 800-421-0283, ext. 389. *We appreciate your cooperation.*

Propane prebuy contracts available late July, due in August



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

Online accounts are available to view past deliveries, account balance and make payments. Enroll on polkburnett.com; look for Propane Center. **800-421-0283, ext. 378 or 411.**



Celebrate the freedom of auto bill pay

- Sign up for auto pay from your checking or savings account.
- It's the easiest, most hassle-free way to pay your electric bill.
- No paper. No need to update credit card changes or expiration date.
- Convenient, secure and free!

Enroll on SmartHub or polkburnett.com by scanning QR code > Or give us a call. We're happy to assist, 800-421-0283, ext. 335.



Thank you to all who attended our 88th Annual Meeting and Member Appreciation Day June 5!

Watch for meeting highlights, board election results and bylaw changes in your August Powerlines.



We'll give you a rebate to have your home tested by a Polk-Burnett approved energy rater

Co-op members, have your home tested by a certified energy rater to identify heat and AC loss, evaluate insulation and learn the best ways to improve your home's energy performance and lower your energy costs.

We offer a \$350 rebate toward a certified home performance test and up to \$1,000 rebate on subsequent home energy upgrades. Call us to find a local energy rater and learn more, 800-421-0283, x318. *It's the best deal of summer to lower your energy costs!*

Heat up the grill to save energy this summer



Do you know that grilling can help lower your energy bill? Cooking outdoors keeps heat out of the kitchen, so your AC doesn't have to work as hard. Cooking with small appliances, like air fryers and slow cookers, also reduces energy, heat and electric bills. Looking for more ways to save and improve comfort? Call 800-421-0283, ext. 595 or scan QR code >



If we've provided you with reliable power and extraordinary service, would you consider sharing a Google review on our behalf? Scan QR code at right > Thank you!



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

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

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

Follow us on Facebook. Sign up for our SmartHub app.

800-421-0283 • polkburnett.com



Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer | Member Owned | Community Focused

