



Member satisfaction is stronger than ever

Thank you for giving us high marks!

by Steve Stroshane, general manager



I'd like to thank all of you who completed our 2024 member survey in December

We're grateful to have earned an American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI®) score of 87 on a 100-point scale, based on member feedback from our December survey.* Polk-Burnett members are at the heart of everything we do. That's why this high score means so much to us. In comparison to the syndicated 2024 ACSI Energy Utility Study, we outperformed the 2024 average score for municipal utilities of 75, and the score for investor-owned utilities of 74.

Each year, Polk-Burnett conducts a member satisfaction survey to get your feedback on our performance. As a cooperative, we are owned by our members and follow democratic principles where members have a voice. The survey was emailed to 14,620 members, and 2,243 were returned for a 15% response rate.

In addition to scoring four standard ACSI questions about your satisfaction, members also shared 1,043 comments, 80% of them were positive. We read every one of your comments, and I'd like to share a few samples with you:

- ♥ Great people. Responsive. Reliable. Good communications. Committed to community.
- ♥ They have been very easy to work with and very knowledgeable when I have questions.
- ♥ Outages are minimal and short lived... keep up the good work!
- ♥ Great app and easy payment methods.
- ♥ Thank you for all you do! Always reliable, always professional, always informative.
- ♥ We love being a co-op member.
- ♥ I like that we get notifications about power outages and estimated outage times.
- ♥ Love that I can always talk to a friendly person.
- ♥ Capital credit program is awesome!
- ♥ The co-op is AMAZING! We have never had a utility that operates like a business that actually cares about its customers.

Of course, we also received negative survey comments, mostly related to rates. We never expect people to like rates, but we believe it's important for our members to know how co-op rates are set—to cover the actual cost of services delivered to you, not to generate profit. In fact, any margins left after expenses are returned to members each year as Capital Credits.

More specifically, we know that some of you have a negative opinion of the **daily availability charge**, especially our seasonal members who may use little or no electricity for weeks or months at a time. As a refresher, the daily availability charge covers your share of the cost to build and maintain the electric grid that makes power available at your location. These facilities (such as poles, transformers and meters) have to be there all the time, whether members are using power or not. The daily availability charge is shared by all 22,000+ co-op members. The charge is higher in rural areas because costs are shared by fewer members.

Another complaint is that the co-op pays **too little for excess solar energy** generated by members. We're happy to work with members who want to install residential solar, but we always recommend that you size your system properly to meet your power needs. Yes, excess solar energy can be sold to the co-op, but we will only pay the wholesale market price (the same price we pay to buy wholesale power). Paying a premium that's higher than the wholesale rate is not fair to our other members.

Surveys give members a voice and help us learn what's working and what we can do better for our local members and community.

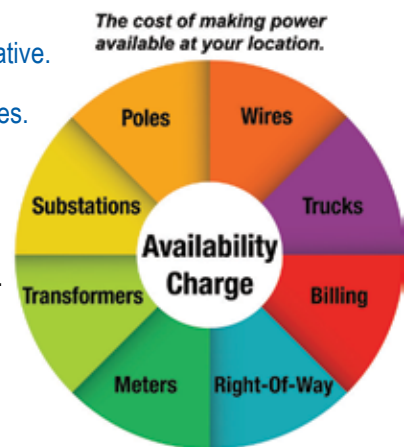
From your feedback, we're confident that our mission and your expectations are one and the same—providing reliable power with efficiency and extraordinary service. That's our promise to you. ♥

Thank you again for your feedback and high scores. It is greatly appreciated!

All who submitted a survey were entered into a drawing for a \$50 bill credit. Congratulations to the following winners:

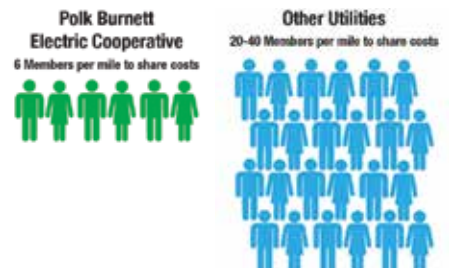
Brian Bocan, Webster
 Kathleen Hetzel, Amery
 Leslie Lodermeier, Amery
 Alexa Pocerlich, Balsam Lake
 Glen Talmadge, Siren

Stephen Christenson, Amery
 Charles Letendre, Dresser
 Susan Lowe, Luck
 Theresa Swanberg, Frederic
 Christopher Tenute, Webster



Shared by all 22,000 co-op members.

Equipment costs have increased 40% since 2020.
For 2025, our investment in system upgrades to improve your service and reliability is \$7 million.



*Compared to publicly measured energy utilities in the ACSI® survey of customers rating their own energy utility. Results based on data provided by Polk-Burnett Energy Cooperative, collected between December 2 - 10, 2024. ACSI did not regulate the survey administration or sample size. ACSI and its logo are registered trademarks of the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. For more about the ACSI, visit www.theacsi.org.



Lower energy costs and improve comfort in your home
\$350 OFF PERFORMANCE TEST FOR YOUR HOME
UP TO \$1,000 REBATE ON SUBSEQUENT HOME ENERGY UPGRADES

Have your home tested by a certified energy rater, using a blower door fan and infrared camera. The energy rater will identify heat loss, evaluate insulation and provide a report with the best ways to improve your home's energy performance.

800-421-0283, x318 | polkburnett.com



Wrapped in savings

Is your home properly insulated? Insulation makes your home more comfortable and can save you energy and money. Insulation acts like a cozy coat that reduces heat loss during the winter and reduces heat gain during the summer.

Adding insulation and air sealing your home can provide the biggest bang for your buck in energy savings and overall comfort. The most common areas to insulate are attics, ceilings and crawlspaces.

Insulation is rated in R-value, which measures the material's resistance to conductive heat flow. Selecting the most effective R-value depends on climate and what part of the house you're insulating.

Investing in proper insulation for your home enhances comfort and lowers your energy use and costs. A great place to start is with a home performance test, where a local energy rater offers recommendations for your home. See above.



Deadline to apply for 2025 co-op board election is March 7

This spring, Polk-Burnett will hold an election for co-op board directors in districts 4, 5 and 6. Members in those districts have an opportunity to get involved in co-op decision making by running for a seat on the board. Directors serve three-year terms and represent all co-op members at monthly meetings to guide policy and budget decisions. If you are interested in appearing on the 2025 board election ballot, contact the general manager's office, 800-421-0283, ext. 313. The deadline to apply is March 7.

Learn more about Polk-Burnett's board of directors and see map of co-op districts on polkburnett.com.



Propane tank monitors check gas levels for you

We hear it often, Polk-Burnett Propane customers don't like walking outside to check tank levels, especially in the winter. Installing a monitor on your propane tank may be just the solution. Tank monitors are especially helpful and valuable if you are away from home for an extended amount of time or when they're installed at a second home.

Polk-Burnett Propane offers an electronic monitoring system on your propane tank to record the tank volume daily. Tank levels and alerts are communicated by an app to your smart phone and to our office. With this information, propane delivery can be made when your tank reaches 20 to 30%.

The cost is \$6 per month, and we have three different models to best fit your need. If you'd like to take the worry out of checking your tank, please contact Polk-Burnett Propane for more information, 800-421-0283, ext. 411 or 378.

Convenient bill pay option ♥ Pay by cash at local retailers

For your convenience, Polk-Burnett offers many ways to pay your electric bill, including payment on our website and SmartHub app, by phone, through the mail or in our office during business hours or secure drop box.

Members can also set up auto pay through your bank or credit card. And you do you know you can also pay your electric bill at **Dollar General**, **Family Dollar** and **Walmart**? Just present the barcode from your SmartHub account.

If you don't have a SmartHub account, we'd be happy to help you enroll or we can provide a barcode for you.

Please note that there is a \$1.50 convenience fee, paid to the retailer, to use this service.

Let's stay connected

Make sure you receive your Capital Credits, the best service and outage response.

Keep your contact information up to date.

Thank you!

Update on SmartHub, polkburnett.com or 800-421-0283, ext. 335.



Space heater safety tips

Space heaters can take the chill out of a cold room, but always follow these safety rules:

- ❄️ Make sure space heater has an auto shutoff if it tips over.
- ❄️ Plug space heater directly into outlet, never an extension cord.
- ❄️ Place space heater on a level, non-flammable surface, away from rugs, curtains and furniture.
- ❄️ Never leave space heater unattended when in use. Unplug when leaving the room or going to bed.



Also, be aware that running an electric space heater will increase your electric bill. For tips to improve energy efficiency and comfort in your home, contact our member services team, 800-421-0283, ext. 595.

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.

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Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer | Member Owned | Community Focused

