



POWERLINES

POLK-BURNETT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE | APRIL 2020



How will you celebrate Earth Day?

by General Manager Steve Strohane

Earth Day is one of the largest civic events in the world, and on April 22, we can all be a part of the global effort to help preserve the environment and our local natural resources.

Did you know Earth Day has its roots right here in our part of Wisconsin?

Gaylord Nelson, a U.S. Senator from Clear Lake, Wisconsin, is the founder and leader of the first Earth Day in 1970.

No matter how you feel about politics, climate change or the green movement, we can all agree that we enjoy our rural lifestyle and the natural beauty of northwestern Wisconsin. In this month's column, **I'd like to share some of the things we're doing at Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative to protect our little corner of the world:**

- **Renewable energy mix is 20% and growing:** Renewable energy makes up about 20% of the energy produced by our wholesale power provider, Dairyland Power Cooperative. Dairyland is diversifying its generation to reduce carbon and be future ready. It has a goal of 29% renewable by 2029. We support sustainable growth of alternative energy, along with long-term energy security and grid reliability for our local membership.

- **SunTuria Solar:** Dedicated in 2017, SunTuria Solar is the first utility scale solar in our service territory. ENGIE North America (formerly SoCore Energy) owns and operates the array on 10 acres of land leased from Polk-Burnett behind our Centuria office. Polk-Burnett and Dairyland purchase the energy output at a fixed rate for 25 years. We're proud of this local solar development because it replaces fossil fuel generation and provides a long-term, stable energy price for our membership. SunTuria Solar has 4,840 panels and powers about 200 homes. Ground under the array is restored prairie and pollinator habitat. To schedule a tour for your school or community group, call us or visit polkburnett.com. You can also track solar energy output on our website.

- **Evergreen renewable energy blocks:** Do you know that Polk-Burnett offers renewable energy blocks for co-op members who would like to support renewable generation without owning a wind turbine or solar panels? 100 kWh blocks are \$1 per month, added to your regular electric bill. Buy one block or enough to power your whole house. Your Evergreen subscription supports efforts to increase renewable generation.

- **Home solar and wind:** If you are interested in building your own solar array or wind turbine, I encourage you to check with us before you start your project. We can help you consider the size of your system to fit your family's energy needs and safely connect your system to the power grid. We also work with members on a rebate and net metering rate. We support residential solar and wind, but do not purchase excess energy at a rate that increases costs for our other members. Our policy goals are safety, reliability and fairness for all.

There are many ways we as individuals and families can make every day Earth Day. Try these simple tips:

- **Seal air leaks** around windows and doors with weather stripping and caulk.

- **Replace air filters** to help your HVAC system run efficiently.

- **Upgrade to LEDs** to save energy and replacement costs.

- **Turn off lights and electronics** when you leave the room.

- **Only wash full loads** of clothes and dishes.

- **Apply for EnergySense rebates** to help you reduce energy and improve comfort in your home. Rebates are available for renewable energy systems, geothermal and air source heat pumps, EV chargers, and energy efficient appliances and LEDs. One of our best incentives is \$300 off home performance testing and up to \$1,000 on recommended home upgrades.

Last year, co-op members received \$162,952 in rebates and saved 860,396 kWhs of energy! I encourage members to take advantage of our EnergySense rebates!

The utility industry and member expectations are changing.

One thing that will not change: Co-op members can count on us to deliver safe, reliable electricity with efficiency and extraordinary service. We're always here to serve you and improve our local quality of life.

As we celebrate Earth Day, let's continue to work together to make a positive impact for our community and our beautiful planet. Stop by our office or give us a call, 800-421-0283, ext. 595, if we can assist you.



Polk-Burnett employees clean up Hwy 35 between Luck and Milltown.



GO SOLAR!
Home of SunTuria Solar.
Call for a tour for your school or community group.



**CO-OP MEMBERS:
GET A \$750 REBATE ON
SOLAR & WIND SYSTEMS**

FREE SOLAR ENERGY SEMINAR
Things you need to know before installing solar
Tuesday, May 5, 5:30 p.m.
RSVP to 800-421-0283, x595.
See polkburnett.com for more information.



**You've got friends
in high places.**

Lineman
Appreciation Day
April 13, 2020

#ThankALineworker

Mark your calendars:

2020 ANNUAL MEETING AND MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY

FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 1 - 4 PM
POLK-BURNETT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
1001 State Road 35, Centuria

- * Bucket Truck Rides, Kids Electricity Station Face Painting, Solar Sam
- * BBQ Pork Sliders, Cheese Curds, Kettle Corn, Mini Donuts, Root Beer Floats
- * Drawing for \$500 Electric Bill Credit
- * \$5 DQ Cards for First 100 Kids!

Make your voice heard:

2020 CO-OP BOARD ELECTION DISTRICTS 1, 2 AND 3

BALLOTS MAIL EARLY MAY

Results announced
JUNE 5 ANNUAL MEETING
POLK-BURNETT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

All members in Districts 1, 2 and 3 will receive a ballot in the mail. Cast your ballot by mail or online.

Find your co-op district on polkburnett.com
My Co-op > Board of Directors



Help us protect the Karner blue butterfly

Polk-Burnett follows eco-friendly practices to help protect the Karner blue butterfly. We've marked habitat sites under power lines, and ask co-op members and employees to tread carefully in these areas this spring and summer. This will help the DNR preserve and study the endangered butterfly. The Karner blue butterfly is often found near purple lupine plants in sandy soil.

Building or landscaping this spring? Call before you dig



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

April is national Safe Digging Month. Before you build a deck, install a fence, plant a tree or dig into any home improvement project, have utility lines marked. One call helps protect you from injury and expense.

Please note: Diggers Hotline does not mark private utility lines.
Contact the co-op for a list of local electricians that provide this service.

Call Diggers Hotline three working days before you dig to have buried utility lines located, 800-242-8511, 811 or diggershotline.com. It's free!

A clear right-of-way means safe, reliable power

"Polk-Burnett maintains the right-of-way under power lines to keep power flowing safely to your home. Right-of-way maintenance is intended to keep tree branches and brush away from high-voltage power lines. This ensures fewer blinks and outages, improved access for faster restoration times, and less risk of fire and life-threatening electrocution. Thank you for your cooperation." ~ Rick Kosloski, rights-of-way manager



Annual herbicide notice for members

Polk-Burnett's mission is to provide members with safe, reliable power as efficiently as possible. An important part of this mission is our right-of-way program, which includes herbicide application to control growth of woody stemmed vegetation under power lines.

In 2020, Polk-Burnett will continue its herbicide program to control vegetation in the electric right-of-way. Trained, licensed contractors will walk the rights-of-way with a backpack container and use a hand wand to apply a low-volume herbicide; only the leaves of woody stemmed vegetation are targeted (see photo above). The application is scheduled to begin in June and will conclude in October.

If you choose to decline the use of herbicide, please complete and return form below by May 22 to:

Polk-Burnett, Rights-of-Way Department, 1001 State Road 35, Centuria, WI 54824.

If form is not received by May 22, 2020, herbicide application may occur on properties not currently in our database.

IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO COMPLETE THIS FORM OR CONTACT US IF:

- 1) You are served by underground power lines. Polk-Burnett does not apply herbicide to underground lines.
- 2) You have already sent this form or contacted Polk-Burnett in the past to decline the use of herbicide.

Visit polkburnett.com/herbicide-faq to see if your property is already on the No Herbicide list.

Please do not apply herbicide on my property(s). I understand that if I have multiple properties where I do not want herbicide application, I must notify Polk-Burnett of all locations, so they can be properly identified. I understand that I must place signs (provided by Polk-Burnett upon request) beneath the power lines to identify my property boundaries and that future right-of-way maintenance will be performed by mowing.

Save paper and postage: Properties can be added to the No Herbicide list on polkburnett.com/herbicide-faq

Name: _____

Location Number or Account Number: _____

Parcel ID Number from County Tax Record: _____

Property Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address (Optional): _____

Signature: _____

If you do not know how the right-of-way on your property is maintained or if you have questions about herbicide application, call us at 800-421-0283, ext. 329. We're happy to help. To learn more about herbicide application, and view product labels and material safety data sheets, visit polkburnett.com/right-way.

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.

Like us on Facebook. Follow us on Twitter.

800-421-0283 • polkburnett.com



Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer | Member Owned | Community Focused

