

# POWERLINES

POLK-BURNETT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE | FEBRUARY 2019

HAPPY  
VALENTINE'S  
DAY



## You are the heart and soul of the co-op

by General Manager Steve Stroshane

Today's consumers say business should be measured by more than financial performance. Of course, we're always working to hold expenses down, but as a cooperative, we have a purpose beyond capitalism, and our bottom line is different than utilities that work for a profit. Our key metrics include reliability, safety, member satisfaction, as well as cost controls.

♥ **Reliable Power:** Our first priority is always to provide you with reliable, safe electricity. You can count on us to deliver power for heating, cooking, hot water, charging electronics, keeping your lights on and so much more. We know you rely on electricity for your well-being and quality of life.

♥ **Extraordinary Service:** We're also here to answer your questions with a live voice. We can help with account changes and payment arrangements; we can hook up your new meter or security light, and we've got a great deal on water heaters (see back). For those of you who prefer to connect with us online, our new website provides 24/7 convenience. Visit [polkburnett.com](http://polkburnett.com) to find our outage center, SmartHub account access, solar energy trackers and rebate forms.

♥ **Co-op Member Benefits:** SmartHub account access, EnergySense rebates and Capital Credits are direct benefits of your co-op membership. We've helped members improve comfort and energy efficiency in your homes by providing EnergySense rebates since 2008. And since our beginning, we've distributed Capital Credits to members, based on the amount of electricity you buy. Last year, we returned more than \$1 million!

♥ **Community Support:** Co-ops support our community beyond electric service. We give back through Operation Round Up, our scholarship program and economic development loans. Co-op employees also volunteer to make our hometowns better.

♥ **Polk-Burnett was founded 81 years ago in 1938 to fulfill a vital need in our community** that wasn't being met by other utilities. Concerned local leaders came together to build our co-op and bring electricity to areas where there was none. Most of you don't remember when the lights came on in rural homes and farms, and over time, folks have come to think of us as just another energy provider. But we are not. Polk-Burnett is a co-op that is always working to meet the needs of the community we serve. We are able to do this because of members like you.

♥ **To co-op employees, you are not just a customer, you are a member** of our co-op and without you, we would not exist. *You are our heart and soul.* While times have changed, our mission has not. We view our role as a catalyst for good. Working together, we can accomplish great things for our members and our community.

PS: *In our 2018 survey, you told us that outage texting and renewable energy are important to you. I'm happy to report that we offer both; please read more below.*

WE LOVE  
SOLAR

## Co-op electricity is becoming greener

In our 2018 member survey, many of you said that renewable energy is important to you, and that it should be a priority for the co-op. Polk-Burnett and our wholesale power provider, Dairyland Power Cooperative, are diversifying generation resources and increasing solar and wind energy.

**Today, about 18% of the energy that flows into our distribution system from Dairyland Power Cooperative is from renewable sources.**

*Nationwide, renewables make up about 10% of the power mix, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.*

Our new **SunTuria Solar** array in Centuria is one of 18 solar facilities developed by Dairyland Power Cooperative, and it's the first utility-scale solar in our service territory. We are proud to provide you with clean, renewable energy to power your homes and devices.

See our **solar energy tracker** on [polkburnett.com](http://polkburnett.com) and let us know if your school or community group would like a **SunTuria Solar tour**.

Polk-Burnett also offers rebates for members who install residential solar and wind, and you can purchase renewable energy blocks through our **Evergreen** program. Visit [polkburnett.com](http://polkburnett.com) or call us to learn more.



## Sign up for outage texts and be prepared for winter storms

If an outage has been reported in your area, we'll send you a text when the power goes out and when it is restored.

We'll also text estimated restoration time and outage cause, when possible.

Report outages on SmartHub or call 800-421-0283.

Visit our online Outage Center for outage map and outage text enrollment.

[polkburnett.com](http://polkburnett.com)

## Welcome Jerry Okonek, new co-op board director



Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative board directors appointed Jerry Okonek of Spooner to serve on the board and represent members in co-op district 7.

His appointment began in October 2018 to fill a vacancy in his district, following the resignation of Maury Miller.

Okonek is a resident of the Town of Scott. He grew up on a resort and dairy farm on Big McKenzie Lake. He graduated from Spooner High School and WITC in Rice Lake. He and his wife, Linda, have three children; all are graduates of Spooner High School.

Okonek has 37 years of experience as a general contractor and owns OK Construction, Inc. He shares his expertise as an adviser for Tiger Manufacturing at Webster High School and serves on the advisory board for WITC's wood tech program. Okonek recently retired from the Scott Fire Department, following 33 years of service, including 24 years as chief.

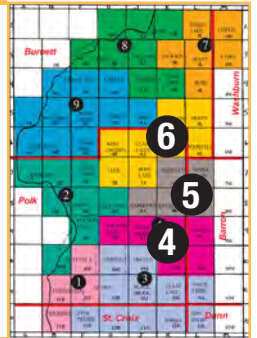
"After 30-plus years on the fire department, I'd like to continue to serve my community in another capacity," said Okonek. "I believe my experience would be helpful to Polk-Burnett, and I appreciate the opportunity to represent my neighbors on the co-op board."

## Interested in serving on the co-op board?

Polk-Burnett holds elections each spring for the co-op board of directors. This year, board positions in co-op districts 4, 5 and 6 will be on the ballot. Members in these districts are invited to get involved in co-op decision making by running for a position on the co-op board in 2019. Directors serve three-year terms and represent all co-op members at monthly meetings.

If you are interested in running for a board position in district 4, 5 or 6, contact the general manager's office, 800-421-0283, ext. 313. The deadline to apply is March 8.

For a district map and more details about board elections, visit [polkburnett.com](http://polkburnett.com)



## Special price on Marathon® water heaters

When you participate in Polk-Burnett's load control program

Co-op member price: **\$750** plus tax.

If water heater is for new home construction or gas replacement, member price is just: **\$250** plus tax.

A 100-gallon Marathon® water heater is an investment that pays for itself in energy savings, and when you install it on the off-peak rate, it's one of the most cost-effective ways to heat water for your home:

- ♥ Marathon® water heaters are long-lasting tanks that will not rust or corrode; they are guaranteed not to leak as long as you own your home, (residential use only).
- ♥ Marathon® 100-gallon water heaters are highly efficient and cost no more to operate than a standard 50-gallon tank.
- ♥ Insulated with 2.5 inches of foam, they minimize heat loss, and heat water for just 10 to 15 minutes per day to maintain water temp when no hot water is being used.
- ♥ The lower element is titanium for superior resistance to lime buildup.
- ♥ The bowl-shaped tank drains completely, preserving the life of the elements.



Polk-Burnett's EnergySense program helps members make smart energy choices for the environment, your home and pocketbook. [Contact us to learn about a Marathon® water heater for your home, 800-421-0283, ext. 595.](#)

## Co-op security light brightens from dusk to dawn

Polk-Burnett offers energy-efficient LED security lights for co-op members. Security lights are installed on Polk-Burnett poles and operate from dusk to dawn. Members are charged a monthly maintenance fee for the light, and installation fees may apply.

All co-op security lights use LEDs, which save about 70% in energy costs and \$50,000 per year in repair and replacement costs.

If you are interested in having an LED security light installed, call 800-421-0283, ext. 308.



## Safety tip: Use space heaters with caution

Space heaters are a leading cause of house fires. Keep your home and family safe:

- ♥ Make sure space heater has an auto shutoff if it tips over.
- ♥ Plug space heater directly into an outlet, never an extension cord.
- ♥ Space heaters should be cool to the touch when in use.
- ♥ Place space heater on a level, non-flammable surface, away from rugs, curtains and furniture.
- ♥ Never leave a space heater unattended when in use. Unplug when leaving the room or going to bed.
- ♥ Don't be misled by expensive models that claim to lower heating bills. Electric heaters cost from \$30 to \$300, but no matter what the price, all 1,500-watt electric heaters use the same amount of electricity to operate and deliver the same heat output. Be safe and stay clear of marketing hype. Get the facts about electric space heaters from the energy experts at Polk-Burnett, 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 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](http://polkburnett.com)



Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer | Member Owned | Community Focused

