

POWERLINES

POLK-BURNETT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

January 2021



Let's connect this new year

by General Manager Steve Strohane

We greatly appreciate our connection to you, the 21,000 members we serve. As we begin a new year, we'd like to help you maximize the value you can get from Polk-Burnett through a variety of programs, products and services:

- * For example, we can help you save money on your electric bill with our **EnergySense rebate** program and home performance tests.
- * When you download our **SmartHub** app, you can monitor and manage your home energy use, pay your bill online, view and report power outages, and even read this Powerlines newsletter. Once enrolled, you can choose how you'd like to be notified by selecting email or text preferences.
- * When you follow Polk-Burnett on **Facebook**, you can stay up to date on power restoration efforts, co-op director elections and tips to save energy and money. You'll also see photos of our line crews in action and employees helping with community service projects; we all enjoy seeing good things happening in our hometown!
- * When you sign up to receive **outage text alerts**, you will know when the power is out at your location, as well as when it's restored, and if possible, the cause of the outage. For longer outages, we'll text an estimated restoration time, whenever possible, so you can make plans for you and your family.
- * Another way we are improving our connection to members is with our **electric grid and meter upgrade**. The project was announced in our December Powerlines. Over the next two years, more than 21,000 meters across the system will be replaced with new technology. Your existing meter is outdated and our supplier has stopped making replacement parts. We see this as an opportunity to benefit the co-op and our members by 1) replacing aging infrastructure, 2) increasing system efficiencies, 3) improving outage notification and restoration and 4) providing more energy information for our members. Watch for more information in the coming months; we'll be sure to notify you when we upgrade your meter.
- * Providing you with accurate and timely information in person, over the phone, by mail and online is important to us. We don't want you to miss out on potential savings or notifications! That's why we want to make sure we have your most current **contact information**. Updated contact information can even speed up the power restoration process during an outage! When you call to report an outage, our system can predict the number and location of affected homes across the system, as well as the possible cause of the outage, making it easier and faster for Polk-Burnett crews to fix the problem.

We hope you will connect with us whenever and wherever you can: Whether you attend our annual meeting, provide survey feedback, visit our drive-thru, call a co-op employee or download our app!

We exist to serve our members, and when we're better connected, we're better prepared to answer your call and meet your expectations. To update your contact information or learn more about co-op programs that can help you, visit polkburnett.com or call us at 800-421-0283. We look forward to connecting with you!

❄️ Winter weather is here! ❄️

ENROLL TO RECEIVE OUTAGE TEXT ALERTS

If the power goes out at your location.



2021 work plan invests in grid reliability

by Operations Manager Ed Johansen

Our mission will always be to provide reliable electricity for rural families, farms and businesses. During the past 20 years, we've taken many steps to reduce the frequency and duration of power outages for our members. In 2021 our work continues, and we will **invest \$5 million to upgrade and maintain a reliable electric system**. Our 2021 work plan includes:

- Replacing 20 miles of aging underground cable
- Constructing 13 miles of new overhead power line
- Converting 22 miles of overhead line to underground line
- Replacing 78 poles that didn't pass inspection
- Clearing trees and brush from the right-of-way to improve safety and reduce outages
- Improving grid redundancies and substation equipment, so power can be re-routed during outages

We work hard to strengthen our system and keep your power on, but weather, animals, accidental dig-ins and transmission line failures cause outages beyond our control. If your lights go out, know that co-op crews are on the way. Our priorities are restoring your power quickly, while keeping you informed.



Save energy and money with co-op rebates

Polk-Burnett's EnergySense rebate program has helped members conserve and save since 2008. Again this year, we're pleased to offer rebates and incentives to help you improve energy efficiency and comfort in your home, while lowering your electric bills.

2021 EnergySense Rebate Program

- Home Performance Testing and Upgrade Rebate
- Appliance and Appliance Recycling Rebates
- Lighting Rebates
- HVAC Rebates, Air Source and Geothermal Heat Pump Rebates
- Renewable Energy and e-Vehicle Charger Incentives
- Commercial and Ag Efficiency Incentives
- Marathon Water Heater Special Member Price
- Air Source Heat Pump Water Heater Rebates

For 2021 rebate forms and information, visit polkburnett.com or call 800-421-0283, ext. 595.



Run for a seat 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 7, 8 and 9 will be on the ballot. Members in those districts are encouraged to make their voices heard by voting.

Members also have an opportunity to get involved in co-op decision making by running for a position on the co-op board. Directors serve three-year terms and represent all co-op members at monthly meetings.

If you are interested in running for an open board position in District 7, 8 or 9, contact the general manager's office, 800-421-0283, ext. 313. The deadline to apply is March 5, 2021.

For a district map and more details about board elections, visit polkburnett.com.

Keep your propane tank clear of snow and ice



As a courtesy to your propane driver, please maintain a path to your LP tank and keep your tank clear of snow and ice to allow propane to vaporize properly.

Polk-Burnett Propane reminds you to check your tank percentage from time to time this winter, even if you're on auto-fill, and contact us if your tank is 30% or less full.

Call Polk-Burnett Propane if we can assist with propane deliveries to your home or business, 800-421-0283, ext. 378 or 411.



4 ways to stay cozy this winter

When you're feeling chilly at home this winter, try these budget-friendly ways to keep comfortable without turning up the thermostat:

❄️ One of the easiest ways to stay cozy at home is to keep your feet warm. Our feet play a critical role in regulating body temperature, so when your feet are warm, your body feels warm. Try a pair of comfortable wool socks or slippers.

❄️ On winter days when the sun is shining, take advantage of natural warmth from sunlight. Open your curtains and blinds to let the sunshine in during the warm and bright part of the day. You'll feel the difference.

❄️ Another way to make your home cozier is to use a humidifier. Cold air doesn't hold water vapor like warm air, so by adding humidity inside your home, you can feel a little warmer. A favorable level of humidity in your home can also help clear sinuses, soften skin and improve sleep.

❄️ Beyond adding visual appeal to your home, area rugs can provide extra insulation and a warm surface for your feet on cold winter days. Use large area rugs in rooms where you spend the most time. You'll enjoy the new colors and textures of the rug, and the additional warmth will help keep your home comfortable.

These are just a few ways to stay cozy this winter without turning up the thermostat. Please give us a call for more tips to save energy and money, while improving comfort in your home, 800-421-0283, ext. 595.



Hot tip!

Did you know that electric induction stoves, which cook food without any flame, will reduce indoor air pollution, and can bring water to a boil about twice as fast as a gas stove?

Check out the recipe for a green future here!

Induction cooktops are a type of electric cooktop. They use electromagnetic coils beneath the ceramic glass surface to transfer energy directly to induction-ready cookware.

Co-op members can get a rebate on electric induction stoves and other energy efficient electric appliances.

Call us to learn more: 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.

Like us on Facebook. Follow us on Twitter.

800-421-0283 • polkburnett.com



Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer | Member Owned | Community Focused

