

POWERLINES

POLK-BURNETT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE | SEPT. 2019



Thank you for your patience and support during storm restorations!

Power restored to 9,000 members

by General Manager Steve Stroshane

On July 19, a tornado, torrential rain and straight-line winds caused widespread damage and power outages for 9,000 co-op members across Polk-Burnett's service territory. Hardest hit were areas in Polk County, east of Luck, Milltown and Balsam Lake and north of Amery and Turtle Lake, especially the areas around Half Moon, White Ash, Pipe, Long, Big Round, Blake, Horseshoe and Staples lakes.

Polk-Burnett initiated storm restoration efforts immediately: By 6 a.m. Saturday, just 12 hours after the lights went out, all transmission lines, substations and 5,000 members were back on. By Sunday morning, power for 6,500 members had been restored. And by the end of that week, the lights were back on for almost all 9,000 co-op members, except a handful that needed additional repairs due to significant property damage.

We thank our many allies who came to our aid: We were assisted by crews from 11 neighboring cooperatives and three contractors with expertise in tree clearing, underground and overhead power line construction. More than 100 people were working in the field and a dozen more were coordinating restoration efforts and outage communications in our Centuria office.

Reliable power and information: If you followed us on Facebook that week in July, you know that our goal was not only to restore power quickly, but to keep you informed. Daily updates were seen by thousands of people and our posts received more than 75,000 likes, shares and comments. Our online outage map had 8,739 visits and our call center received 7,539 phone calls.

"We thank our members and community for your patience and support during storm restorations."

Be prepared: "Our number one goal is always safe, reliable power, but Wisconsin weather can be a tough opponent," said Operations Manager Ed Johansen. "Please like our Facebook page to stay in touch and sign up for outage text alerts on polkburnett.com for those times when Mother Nature gets the best of us."



STORM SAFETY

STAY AWAY FROM DOWNED POWER LINES
KEEP ELECTRONICS AWAY FROM WATER
HAVE A BACKUP PLAN IF YOU NEED POWER
FOR MEDICAL DEVICES

USE GENERATORS ACCORDING TO CODE
SO THEY DON'T BACKFEED ONTO THE GRID
OR RELEASE DANGEROUS EMISSIONS

TURN OFF ELECTRONICS AND APPLIANCES

We were fortunate to have 110 people working in the field and a dozen more in the office to coordinate storm restoration and outage communications. Thank you to crews from neighboring co-ops: St. Croix Electric, Pierce Pepin, Dunn, Eau Claire, Jump River, East Central Energy, Price, Taylor, Vernon, Riverland and MiEnergy, plus Zielies Tree Service, Okay Construction and PUSH underground contractors.



OUTAGE NOTIFICATION



Enroll to receive outage text alerts if your power goes out

Co-op linemen work hard to prevent power outages, but Mother Nature is a tough opponent.

Give us your account number and your cell number, and we'll send you outage text alerts, so you'll know:

1. When power goes out at your location
2. Estimated restoration time, whenever possible
3. When power is restored at your location
4. The cause of the outage, whenever possible

Learn more and enroll on polkburnett.com



Win a \$1,250 co-op scholarship! 54 scholarships, \$67,500 awarded to Class of 2020

Just in time for a new school year, applications are available for Polk-Burnett's Community Service Scholarships. We'll award 54 scholarships for \$1,250 each to high school seniors whose parents are members of Polk-Burnett. Scholarship candidates are also invited to apply for a trip to Washington, D.C.

"This is our opportunity to recognize the sons and daughters of co-op members who make a difference in the lives of others," said Joan O'Fallon, Polk-Burnett communications director. "Since 1987, Polk-Burnett has awarded more than \$711,000 to co-op youth. You could be one of them!"

Giving back to the community and local youth is part of our mission as a cooperative. Scholarships are funded with unclaimed capital credits and do not affect electricity rates.

**APPLY ON
POLKBURNETT.COM**

Operation Round Up awards \$17,482 to local programs

Polk-Burnett's Operation Round-Up awarded \$17,482 to 21 local nonprofits in June, including \$1,500 to Burnett County Foster Closet (left) and \$1,250 to Polk County Criminal Justice Collaborating Council for treatment court (right).



Funding for Operation Round-Up is donated by co-op members who round their monthly electric bill up to the next even dollar amount. **Grant recipients are selected** quarterly by a committee of co-op members and grants are awarded to organizations that improve our local quality of life.

THANK YOU FOR ROUNDING UP YOUR ELECTRIC BILL. YOUR GENEROSITY MAKES A BIG IMPACT!

Visit polkburnett.com to see summer grant winners and learn how your nonprofit can apply.

Clear right-of-way needed for safe, reliable power

The right-of-way (ROW) is a strip of land under power lines. The co-op has the *right and responsibility* to clear vegetation in the ROW that may disrupt your electric service or cause harm to people.

Keeping power lines clear of trees and brush **reduces power outages and blinks**, and gives linemen better access to maintain and repair power lines. This was evident during severe storms in July.

ROW clearing also **improves safety for your home and family**, and helps **prevent forest fires** by ensuring that tree branches do not become energized due to contact with power lines.

Power lines carry high-voltage electricity that is dangerous—even deadly. Never trim a tree in the ROW or near power lines, and do not allow kids to climb trees close to power lines.

Polk-Burnett employees and contractors will work through the fall to maintain a clear ROW.

If you see vegetation near power lines that needs to be trimmed or removed, please contact us.

It's our goal to keep everyone safe and your electric service reliable.



Notice: Wisconsin Energy Assistance

Your household may be eligible for the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program, based on household income and size. Contact your county energy assistance office:

☎ Barron 715-537-6340

☎ Burnett 715-349-7600

☎ Dunn 715-232-1116

☎ Polk 715-485-8480

☎ St. Croix 800-606-9227

☎ Washburn 715-468-4747



Cut energy costs and improve comfort in your home

\$300 OFF Performance Test for Your Home, Plus Up To \$1,000 REBATE on 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 you with a report with the best ways to improve your home's energy performance. **800-421-0283, ext. 595 or polkburnett.com**



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



Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer | Member Owned | Community Focused

