

THE POWER OF LOCAL OWNERSHIP

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March, 2007



Thinking about replacing your old inefficient refrigerator or freezer?

Don't forget to look for the Energy Star® label. A new refrigerator with an Energy Star® label will save you between \$35 and \$70 a year compared to the model designed 15 years ago.

Better yet we'll even help dispose of your old refrigerator or freezer free of charge, all you have to do is call Focus on Energy at 1-888-543-8155.

NSP's Wholesale Rate Increase Reflected on Consumer/Owners Utility Bills



Rice Lake Utilities has been a wholesale electric power purchaser from NSP since 1929. In 2006, NSP applied to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for a 14% wholesale rate increase. The rate increase according to NSP is due partly to increases in fuel and generation costs. Rice Lake Utilities along with nine other municipalities in the state who buy power from NSP intervened in the rate filing. The ten utilities involved, requested through our consultants, a review of the filing by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, which resulted in a five-month suspension, ultimately leading to our municipal wholesale group settling for a 9% increase along with a two-year agreement which will help keep rates flat. This is the first wholesale rate increase NSP has sought since 1993.

The bad news is that our cost of purchased power from NSP is going to increase and our customers will see this rate increase passed on through the Power Cost Adjustment Clause (PCAC) on their monthly billing statement. The average Rice Lake Utilities residential customer can expect an increase of approximately \$3 to \$4 per month.

The good news is, as a result of successful negotiations by the ten utilities to get the original NSP offer decreased, there will be a significant savings for the group over the two-year period.

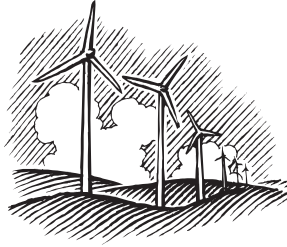
Rice Lake Utilities General Manager, Scott Reimer represented the wholesale power group in Washington, D.C. on two occasions along with consultants from the Boardman Law Firm and Price Financial Consulting to achieve this goal. We realize that any increase is too much; however, we are happy to have been able to mitigate this increase and we will continue to work hard towards keeping rates affordable. In 2006, Rice Lake Utilities recorded the 14th lowest residential electric rates out of 94 public power utilities reporting to the Wisconsin Public Service Commission.





There's Something Blowing In The Wind.....

Wind energy is fast becoming the green energy of choice among many utilities looking to satisfy the new energy standards adopted by the State of Wisconsin, which include the requirement that by the year 2015 10% of all power consumed in Wisconsin will be from renewable energy. Some of the benefits of utilizing wind energy is that it's a safe, clean energy, the supplies are endless and there is no dependence on foreign countries. According to the American Wind Energy Association (AWEA), "Wisconsin is listed among the top 20 states that has a potential to generate electricity economically utilizing wind. Our neighbors to the west, North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota are listed in the top ten states with GREAT potential for wind energy. Using today's technology there is theoretically enough wind power flowing across the country to supply all of our electricity needs. North Dakota *alone* could supply about one third of the nations electricity using wind power".



Assuring a Bright Future

Rice Lake Utilities Journeyman Line-Worker, Gary Haus, was recently chosen to serve on the State Electrical Utility Apprenticeship Advisory Committee. Gary was chosen along with six other employee representatives from around the state to serve a two year term and to be a representative of their particular trade. Employee representatives make sure that apprentices are properly indentured and also assure that the training, including related instruction, is exceeding or meeting what the industry requires. Learning a craft from an accomplished artist has been around for centuries and by having apprenticeships like Rice Lake Utilities Line-worker Apprenticeship Program, trade related business are assuring that their craft will not be lost but will prosper and be strong for future generations to come.

Gary was chosen because of his extensive knowledge as a Journeyman Line-Worker. Gary graduated from Chippewa Valley Technical College in 1987 with a 4.0 GPA in the Electrical Distribution Field. He was hired by RLU in 1987 as an Apprentice Line-Worker. He then went on to the four year apprentice program at the Chippewa Valley Technical College to become a Journeyman Line-Worker for Rice Lake Utilities.

Rice Lake Utilities Prepares For Disconnection Of Residential Electric Service Effective

April 15th, 2006

If you have fallen behind in your utility payments you may be eligible to set up a deferred payment plan to help pay your current bill and any past due amounts owed. You can also pay your past due utility bills with your credit/debit card (Visa, American Express, MasterCard or Discover) 24 hours a day by contacting Official Payment Corporation at 1-800-272-9829 or www.officialpayments.com. (You will be prompted to enter a jurisdiction code. Rice Lake Utilities jurisdiction code is **5947**). A convenience fee will be charged by Official Payment Corp. We also offer an automatic payment plan. Payments can be taken directly out of your savings or checking account each month, all you have to do is fill out a form (available at RLU) and attach a voided check. You also may be eligible for emergency fuel assistance. To find out, please contact the Barron County Energy Assistance Office at 537-5691



Can you dig it??????????

If you can, then you should call diggers hotline three days before digging at
1-800-242-8511

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