



More Power to You

New Red Hawk Substation Ensures System's Reliability

By Shane L. Larson,
Chief Executive Officer

Construction of the Red Hawk Substation is complete and ready to serve the increasing demand for electricity in the Milton Township area and support anticipated growth of the Milton Crossroads Business Park.

The substation also will provide additional backup support for neighboring townships, which is vital to ensure the reliability of service to our members.

With the addition of the Red Hawk Substation, Rock Energy Cooperative now operates 14 substations that serve more than 17,000 meters along 1,300 miles of line in southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois. Compare that to July 15, 1937, the first day electricity was carried over this co-op's lines. On that day, a single source energized 122 miles of line in Rock County and provided service to 166 meters.

Statistics like these show the tremendous growth that has occurred at Rock Energy in its 75 years of operation. I hope you find these historical facts as fascinating as I do. In recognition of our 75th anniversary celebration this year, I plan to include some history tidbits in this column each month.

During the co-op's big growth spurt in the 1950s, substations were built every few years to keep up with the area's growing demand for electricity. The last substation built to serve the co-op came on line eight years ago when the Fulton Substation was added to accommodate increases in home construction in north central Rock County and improve service in the area. Then in 2007, the co-op added four substations to its lines after acquiring the assets of the South Beloit Water, Gas & Electric Company.

Distribution substations like Red Hawk basically are gathering places for high-voltage electricity.



High-voltage transmission lines carry electricity into the substations, where the voltage is reduced so it can be distributed across smaller distribution lines to homes and businesses.

American Transmission Co., which operates the high-voltage transmission system in this area, built the four-mile, 69-kilovolt transmission line that connects the Red Hawk Substation to the grid that serves the area. Contractors built the actual substation with its transformers, lightning arrestors, circuit breakers, and other equipment.

When the work was finished, the substation went through a series of inspections and tests called a commissioning process. After confirmation that all equipment was working properly, the substation began carrying electricity and officially became part of Rock Energy's distribution system.

Our 14 substations are strategically located throughout our service territory and are interconnected in a way that allows nearby substations to back each other up if

a problem arises at one of them. That interconnectivity ensures the reliability of electricity distribution throughout our service territory.

Now that the Red Hawk Substation is up and running, Milton officials can market the Milton Crossroads Business

Park to companies interested in locating in the area and assure them that Rock Energy can adequately meet their electrical needs. Here at Rock Energy, we're proud of the reliable service we provide to our members and believe that the new substa-

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75th ANNUAL MEETING

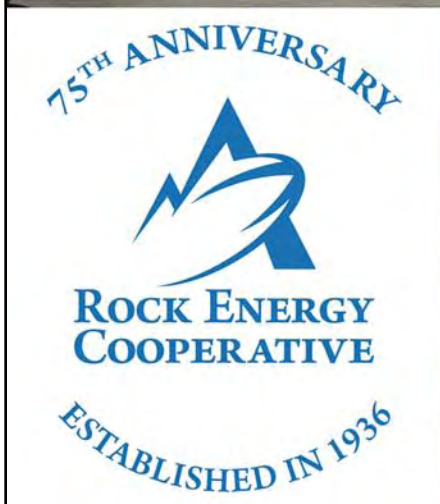
**Monday,
March 28**

**Eclipse Center,
Beloit**



Be sure to mark your calendar and help us celebrate the co-op's 75th anniversary.

Look for complete details in next month's magazine.



Give Your Home's Electrical System a Checkup

Snap, crackle, and pop belong in your cereal bowl, not in the electrical outlets and fixtures in your home.

When your home's electrical circuitry is unhealthy, it may tell you with the loss of power to a circuit, electrical shocks to you and your family, or sparks and flames. Needless to say, none of those is acceptable, so use this checklist to avoid future problems:



- 1) **Electrical outlets** — Check for loose-fitting plugs, which can be a shock or fire hazard. Replace missing or broken wall plates so wiring and components are not exposed. If you have young children in the home, cover unused outlets with plastic safety caps.
- 2) **Plugs** — Never force them into outlets. Don't remove the grounding pin (third prong) to make a three-prong plug fit a two-prong outlet. Avoid overloading outlets with adapters and too many appliance plugs.
- 3) **Cords** — Make sure they are not frayed or cracked, placed under carpets or rugs, or located in high traf-

fic areas. Do not nail or staple them to walls, floors, or other objects.

- 4) **Extension cords** — Use them only on a temporary basis — they are not intended as permanent household wiring. Make sure they have safety closures to protect young children from shock and mouth burn injuries.
- 5) **Light bulbs** — Check the wattage to make sure light bulbs match fixture requirements. Replace bulbs that have higher wattage ratings than recommended. Make sure they're screwed in securely so they don't overheat.
- 6) **Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs)** — Make sure GFCI outlets are installed in your kitchen, bathrooms, laundry, workshop, basement, and garage as well as on outdoor outlets. Test them monthly to ensure they're working properly.
- 7) **Circuit breakers/Fuses** — Fuses should be properly sized for the circuit they are protecting. If you don't know the correct rating, have an electrician identify and label the correct size to be used. Always replace a fuse with the same size you are removing. Check that circuit breakers are working properly.
- 8) **Appliances/Electronics** — If an appliance repeatedly blows a fuse, trips a circuit breaker, or has given you an electrical shock, immediately unplug it and have it repaired or replaced. Look for cracks or damage in wiring and connectors. Use surge protectors to protect expensive electronics.
- 9) **Electrical wiring** — Wiring defects are a major cause of residential blazes. Check periodically for loose wall receptacles, loose wires, or loose lighting fixtures. Listen for popping or sizzling sounds behind walls. Immediately shut off, then professionally replace light switches that are hot to the touch and lights that spark and flicker.
- 10) **Service capacity** — As you continue to upgrade your home with more lighting, appliances, and electronics, your home's electrical service capacity may become overburdened. If fuses blow or trip frequently, have a professional electrician determine the appropriate service requirements for your home.

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tion is an investment that will benefit our members and the communities we serve well into the future.

The addition of a new substation also provides me with an opportunity to remind you that the voltage entering and exiting substations far exceeds anything that you'll find at your home or business and is extremely dangerous. To ensure the public's safety, a locked security fence encloses the substation. In the spring, workers will landscape the area to help it blend in with the surrounding environment.

Earlier in this column, I mentioned our 75th anniversary celebration, which will begin Monday, March 28, with our 75th Annual Meeting at the Eclipse Center in Beloit. I want to encourage you to circle that date on your calendar and make plans to join us as we celebrate our 75 years of operation. Details about the event will be included in next month's magazine.

We truly appreciate the opportunity to serve your energy needs. If we can do anything to improve our service to you, please let us know. ■

Keep your safety checklist, make notes, and refer back to it every time you give your home an electrical review. It will help you ensure you don't miss anything and will serve as a good resource in the future. For more electrical safety information, visit www.SafeElectricity.org. ■

Youth Programs Build Strong Citizens

Rock Energy Cooperative offers two opportunities for high school students to learn more about the political process and develop leadership skills.

The co-op will sponsor two high school juniors on the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. The June 11-17 trip includes meetings with congressional representatives and tours of historic sites. More than 1,000 students from host cooperatives across the nation participate in the tour every year.

Another program is open to current high school freshmen, sophomores, and juniors. The Wisconsin Energy Cooperative Association's 48th Annual Youth Leadership Congress will take place July 13-15 at UW-River Falls. The program introduces students from across the state to cooperative business basics, demonstrates the value of cooperation in everyday life, and offers sessions to help develop leadership skills.

Applicants for both programs must be children of Rock Energy members and reside in the co-op's service territory. The deadline to apply is Feb. 11. For more information, visit www.rock.coop or call Barbara Uebelacker, communications specialist, at (608) 752-4550 or (866) 752-4550 or e-mail her at BarbU@rock.coop. ■



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Ninety percent of the energy it takes to wash clothes is used to heat water. If you wash in cold water, you could save \$40 per year if you have an electric water heater and \$30 annually if you have one powered by natural gas.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

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**Seattle Sutton's Healthy Eating, 2100 E. Milwaukee St. #12, Janesville, WI
(608) 743-4868 – www.seattlesutton.com**



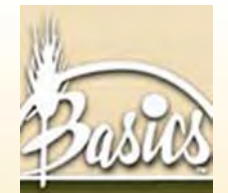
Lose weight and feel great with our weekly program of freshly prepared meals. A total of 21 meals per week, 1,200 or 2,000 calories. No contracts or enrollment fees. Low-fat, sodium-restricted, and low-cholesterol. **\$15 Off Initial Order; \$10 Off Follow-up Orders** (discount on individual weekly order; not valid with other discounts)

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A total of 31 rooms, including four whirlpool rooms. Complimentary breakfast; beer and wine bar; microwave, refrigerator, and coffee service in every room; free wireless high-speed internet; exercise facility; convenience store; flat panel TVs with DVD player; upgraded bedding. **10% Discount Off Any Room**

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For a complete listing of current deals, visit www.rock.coop. Terms and conditions subject to change as desired by participating businesses. You also can use your Co-op Connections Card to receive a discount on prescription drugs and to print online coupons.



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