

Do you know how to stay safe during natural gas emergency?

Rock Energy Cooperative monitors and inspects its natural gas distribution system regularly to provide you with safe and reliable service to heat your home, cook your food, warm your water, and dry your clothes.

“Safety is our major concern, and natural gas is completely safe when used properly,” said Randy Gant, natural gas superintendent at Rock Energy. “But because accidents can happen, it’s important for everyone in your home to know how to recognize a natural gas leak and learn what to do and what not to do if an emergency occurs.

“Please review this information and post it on your refrigerator or other prominent location so you and your family are prepared and can remain safe in an emergency.”

How can I recognize a natural gas leak?

- By smell: Natural gas is colorless and odorless, but Rock Energy and other gas providers add a chemical that makes it smell like rotten eggs so any leaks can be easily detected.
- By sound: A hissing or roaring sound near a gas line might be a sign of a leak.
- By sight: If you see unexplained dead or dying grass in an area, natural gas might be leaking. Dirt or debris blowing in the air and water bubbling in a puddle, pond, or creek are other signs of leaks.

What should I do if I suspect a leak?

If you accidentally break a gas line or dig into a pipeline:

- Immediately evacuate the area and alert everyone nearby to do the same!
- Do not use a telephone or cell phone near the leak because that could ignite the gas.
- When you reach a safe location, call 911 and Rock Energy at (866) 752-4550.

If you smell a strong odor:

- Leave the area immediately!
- Do not use a telephone or cell phone, light a match, turn on or off any light switches, flashlights, garage door openers, or other appliances because an electric arc might ignite the gas.
- Call Rock Energy at (866) 752-4550 to report the leak’s location from a safe location.



If you smell a faint gas odor:

- Make sure all gas appliances and burners on your stove are turned off completely.
- Open one or more windows and wait a few minutes for the gas odor to dissipate before investigating further.
- Check the pilot lights on your gas furnace, water heater, stove, and oven.
- Don’t try to relight an appliance while you can still smell gas.
- If you need assistance relighting the pilot light, call a heating or plumbing contractor.

How can I get more information?

If you have any questions about natural gas safety, Rock Energy will gladly provide you with further details. Just call us at (866) 752-4550 or email questions@rock.coop. Also, watch this magazine for the following natural gas safety messages:

- April: Dig safely.
- June: Pipeline safety.
- August: Buried pipeline dangers.
- October: Carbon monoxide dangers.
- December: Gas leak recognition and response.



Rock Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 



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

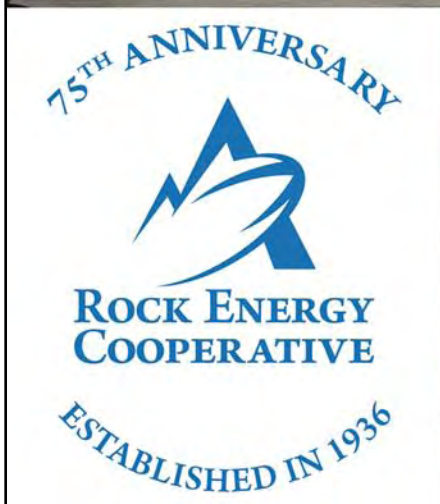
**Monday,
March 28**

**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.



Rebates Available for Energy-Efficiency Upgrades

Rock Energy members who live in Illinois are eligible for rebates of up to \$1,500 when they make specific energy efficiency improvements to their homes.

How much are the rebates?*

Geothermal heat pumps	\$1,500
Air-source heat pumps	\$1,000
Central air conditioning	\$350
Natural gas or LP furnace	\$350
Heat pump water heater	\$250
Insulation/air sealing	\$500 maximum, 30% of project cost

*Rebates will be approved for only one piece of heating or cooling equipment

How does the program work?

1. Call Rock Energy at (866) 752-4550 to arrange an energy assessment, which is required to qualify for the rebates. Appointments will be scheduled between

8 a.m. and 2 p.m. A \$25 fee will be collected at the time of the in-home assessment.

2. You will receive recommendations about how to improve your home's energy efficiency, performance, and comfort.
3. Decide what work will be completed and submit a proposal and cost estimate to us. We will return a signed copy, stating that funds have been set aside for you.
4. Work must be completed within 60 days.
5. Send us a completion form with copies of your receipts.
6. We will issue a check to you.

If you have questions about the program, call our office at (866) 752-4550 between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. You also can visit www.rock.coop and click on the Home logo. ■



More Power to You

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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. De-



tails 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. ■

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

Get Connected

Check out these great deals offered with your Co-op Connections Card



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



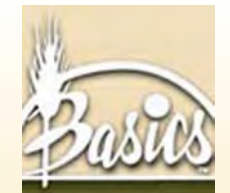
Lose weight and feel great with our weekly program of freshly prepared meals. A total of 21 meals per week, 1,200 or 2,000 calories. No contracts or enrollment fees. Low-fat, sodium-restricted, and low-cholesterol. **\$15 Off Initial Order; \$10 Off Follow-up Orders** (discount on individual weekly order;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

Cobblestone Inn & Suites, 715 Brown School Road, Evansville, WI – (608) 882-0936 – www.cobblestoneinns.com



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**

Basics Cooperative, 1711 Lodge Drive, Janesville, WI – (608) 754-3925 – www.basicshealth.com



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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.



Shane Larson, CEO
Barbara Uebelacker,
Editor

P.O. Box 1758
2815 Kennedy Rd.
Janesville, WI 53547

P.O. Box 126
15229 Willowbrook Rd.
South Beloit, IL 61080

(608) 752-4550 • (866) 752-4550