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# WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* May 2017 NEWS

## Flock to the *Flyway*



TAYLOR ELECTRIC  
*Cooperative*



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# THIS MAY, TAKE THE TIME TO PLUG INTO SAFETY

This month, I'd like to take a moment to reflect on the importance of safety. May is Electrical Safety Month, and Taylor Electric Cooperative knows we all depend on electricity to power our lives, but accidents can happen when electricity is improperly used.

## Our responsibility to you

Taylor Electric's concern for safety extends beyond our employees. We care deeply about the safety of our members, and this month, we encourage you to plug into safety. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, thousands of people in the United States are critically injured and electrocuted as a result of electrical fires, accidents, and electrocution in their own homes.

To promote safety education in our local communities, we frequently provide electrical safety content in the *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News*, *Taylor Report*, Facebook, and on the radio. We encourage the public to contact us if they see a downed power line or any other type of dangerous electrical situation. We strive to provide our communities with safe, reliable, and affordable electricity and to serve as your trusted energy advisor, now and well into the future.

## Our responsibility to employees

It is no accident that safety is a top priority at Taylor Electric. We are committed to a culture of safety that is integral to our daily operations. In fact, Taylor Electric is part of the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program (RESAP) that follows specific guidelines and protocols for electrical safety that are considered leading practices. Our lineworkers are required to wear personal protective equipment at all times when on the job. This includes special fire-resistant clothing that will self-extinguish, limiting potential injuries from burns and sparks. Insulated and rubber gloves are worn in tandem to protect from electrical shock.

Our safety team regularly discusses important safety issues pertaining to work within the building as well as out in the field. We also have a Safety Committee to make sure policies are kept up to date as well as address any safety concerns from the employees.

As the president/CEO of Taylor Electric, I believe it is my duty and responsibility to raise awareness about the importance of electrical safety. Take a moment to plug into safety. Please visit <http://www.esfi.org> for tips about how to keep you and your loved ones safe.

*Mike Schaefer, President/CEO*

MY CO-OP

MAY						
s	m	t	w	t	f	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<p>It's Electrical Safety Month!</p> 
8	9	10	11	12		
15	16	17	18	19	20	
22	23	24	25	26	27	
29	30	31				



# Youth Leadership Congress

UW–River Falls | July 26–28, 2017



The annual **WECA Youth Leadership Congress** is a dynamic three-day event for youth leaders across Wisconsin to develop their **leadership skills** while learning about the purpose, operation, and scope of **cooperative businesses**.

## Take the opportunity to...

- See **what makes the cooperative business model different and successful**, and then apply this knowledge to fun and challenging cooperative activities.
- Identify and learn how to develop your own **leadership skills**.
- Discuss **cooperative careers** with professionals in the industry.
- Be **entertained and challenged** by highly acclaimed motivational speakers who understand teens and address topics that are important and relevant in your life.

This is a **by-teens, for-teens conference** that is planned and developed by a youth board elected at the previous year's event.

## Who should apply?

- Students who will be sophomores or juniors next year, and whose parents are members of Taylor Electric Cooperative.
- Students active in their school and community.

## What does it cost?

- All registration costs are covered by the generous support of electric cooperatives and the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation.
- Interested students should fill out the form below and return it to Taylor Electric Cooperative.

## Youth Leadership Congress Participant Application Form

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsoring cooperative \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Gender \_\_\_\_\_ Grade entering in fall 2017 \_\_\_\_\_

Parent email (used to send links to online health forms) \_\_\_\_\_

*Return this completed form to Taylor Electric Cooperative, N1831 State Highway 13, Medford, WI 54451*



# CONSUMER INTEREST DRIVING CO-OP SOLAR

Driven by increased interest among consumers as well as declining costs, electric cooperatives across the country are finding a multitude of ways to bring the benefits of solar to their members.

New data paints a striking picture: America's electric co-ops expect to double their current solar capacity by the end of 2017, adding more than 480 MW of solar this year for a total capacity of 872 MW nationwide, according to figures from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

In a recent nationwide survey, electric co-ops were asked why they offer or support solar options. More than two-thirds of respondents said they were motivated by a desire to increase consumer-member satisfaction and a majority cited member demand. Increased affordability also played a role, with nearly half of respondents citing the decline in the cost of renewable energy as a factor in enhancing their solar energy program. The survey results clearly show co-ops are listening to their members and they care about costs.

As consumer-owned utilities, electric co-ops view solar as a consumer resource. That's why co-ops lead the utility sector in developing community solar or "shared solar," a program that enables co-op members to invest in solar farms



built and operated by the co-op. Taylor Electric's Bright Horizons has been operational since 2015 and currently has almost 150 shares sold (a share is 350-watts). There are shares still available for sale for \$886, or half unit for \$443. The payments can also be broken down into monthly installments through December 31, 2017.

Cooperation among cooperatives is another key co-op principle, and collaboration is critical to the growth of solar. In 2016, cooperatives announced nine joint projects involving more than 200 local co-ops. Cost savings from the economies of scale in large projects make these projects more affordable.

Taylor Electric's power supplier, Dairyland Power Cooperative, La Crosse, recently constructed a 2 MW solar field on County Road Q, Medford. The field is located in Taylor Electric's service territory and will generate enough power for approximately 330 homes. The project was headed up by SoCore Energy in Chicago.

Co-ops also collaborate by sharing information and knowledge with the nationwide network of cooperative peers. As the early solar adopters gained experience and know-how, they shared best practices with the co-op community.

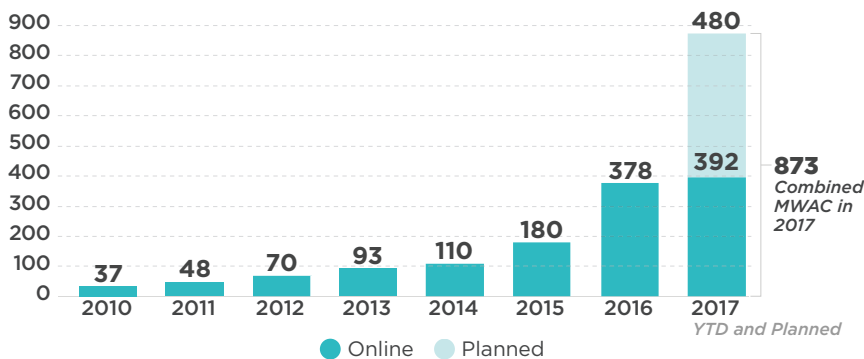
Some co-ops are partnering with local rooftop solar installers or even doing rooftop installation for their members. Other co-ops are installing solar-powered water heaters and irrigation systems. Taylor Electric is researching the possibility of selling ready-to-assemble solar kits. The kits would cost approximately \$12,000 and would have the generating capacity of 4,000 watts. While they typically wouldn't power a four-person household, they would lighten the load on the electric bill.

Cooperatives are developing a variety of solar options, from huge arrays covering hundreds of acres to residential solar installations. No matter what their size, circumstances, or geographic location, all electric co-ops have one thing in common when it comes to solar: They want to help their members make energy choices that are right for them.

## Cooperative solar set to skyrocket

Cooperative solar capacity is projected to double in 2017.

Solar Capacity (MWAC)



NOTE: Co-op solar capacity owned or purchased under contract

Source: NRECA Business & Technology Strategies





# TAYLOR ELECTRIC HOLDS 81<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL MEETING

Medford Senior High School hosted the 81st annual meeting of Taylor Electric Cooperative on Saturday, March 25.

Guests included former Taylor directors and employees, two Clark Electric directors, Focus on Energy representatives, and Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association Government Affairs Director Beata Wierzba, who described the statewide organization and the services it provides for member co-ops.

Board Chairman Dean Tesch presided, delivering a report reviewing milestones in co-op history and showing slides and information about Dairyland Power Cooperative's La Crosse Boiling Water Reactor—a prominent feature of the meeting as members received refund checks for their share of proceeds from Dairyland's nuclear waste breach-of-contract settlement with the federal government.

President and CEO Mike Schaefer discussed co-op finances. He noted that Taylor's share of the Dairyland lawsuit proceeds totaled more than \$728,000 for 2007–2012, with checks for members averaging \$185. He cited costs of \$800,000 for construction of 6.5 miles of underground and 9.7 miles of overhead line. He anticipated spending \$200,000 to replace a 14-year-old bucket truck, and noted that the cooperative is actively clearing right-of-way brush, having

experienced damage and outages in a strong wind storm earlier this year.

He outlined details of the cooperative's five-year strategic plan, including staff training and readiness for future retirements, opportunities for growth, efficiencies, and partnering with other co-ops, member communications, and technology, citing as an example the need to upgrade metering systems that were new in 2002.

Schaefer also drew members' attention to the Bright Horizons community solar project. At \$886 per share, members who bought in prior to 2016 received \$44.86 credit back directly on their electric bill.

Another potential solar opportunity under consideration is small-capacity, ready-to-assemble—not do-it-yourself—solar kits. Schaefer said as details emerge the board will discuss whether to offer the kits, with 59 volts maximum power at a cost of about \$12,000.

Two incumbent directors—Patricia Waldhart and Chuck Zenner—were up for re-election and both won new terms running unopposed. Reorganization returned incumbent officers to their positions: Tesch remains chairman; Zenner, vice chairman; and Waldhart, secretary-treasurer.

**Give TREES a Chance**

Trees with mature height >40' tall  
50' away

Mature trees <40' tall  
20' away

Small trees & shrubs <25' tall  
within 20'

50 ft 20 ft Within 20 ft (but not under lines)

**Trees planted too close to power lines grow into a BIG problem.** To prevent power outages and safety hazards, these trees need to be trimmed and sometimes removed. Do your part to keep trees healthy and prevent power outages.

**Plant trees a safe distance from power distribution lines.** [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org)

**MEMORIAL DAY**

Our office will be closed  
Monday, May 29.

## Michael Schaefer, President/CEO

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## Lainie Kellnofer, Editor



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