

Since 1940

# WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* February 2026 NEWS



**PIERCE PEPIN**

COOPERATIVE SERVICES

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

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## THE FEMA EMERGENCY

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**SUPPLY CHAIN STILL A CHALLENGE**

**COME HAVE A PIECE OF CAKE**

**KIDS AND CRITTERS**







# BILLING CHANGES IN MARCH

Nate Boettcher, President and CEO

**W**e have important updates to share with you this month that will go into effect in March. We are making changes to the way we do billing to help streamline and create more efficiencies in our processes. For the past several years, we have conducted electric billing three times a month. This was done to help spread out the workload and to allow our staff to collect meter readings, send out the most accurate bills, and process payments throughout the month.

Our systems and processes have improved to the point where we can conduct billing once per month, which will free up our staff to take on other tasks during the month. Starting in March, if your account was normally billed on the 20th or 30th, your new billing date will be the 10th, which is an existing bill date for many of our members.

**This means that for some members, you will receive two bills in a very short amount of time. Even though you may receive two bills in a short period of time, you will only be billed for the usage consumed.** We will have flexibility in making sure our members have time to make payments on their accounts for a short period of time.

If you are set up for automatic payments, the date your account is charged will not change.

Come March, we will always bill on the 10th of the month for electric usage between the first and last days of the previous month. This will help us better understand our wholesale power bill as well. Today, having multiple billing cycles with usage spread across different wholesale power bills often means we cannot truly reconcile our monthly usage in a seamless fashion. This leads to additional challenges when trying to do rate studies and calculate

our actual wholesale power costs per kWh. Our staff has figured out ways to work around this, but going forward, this process will allow us a greater ability to analyze these costs and recommend new rate programs.

In modifying our billing approach, bills will be due on the 30th, with late payment calculations starting prior to the next bill. If we don't receive payment by

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the processing of your next billing cycle, you will be subject to disconnection if your past-due balance is not paid within the next billing cycle.

We also encourage members to take advantage of online billing through SmartHub and to adopt paperless billing. Images of your exact paper bill are available online for a period of at

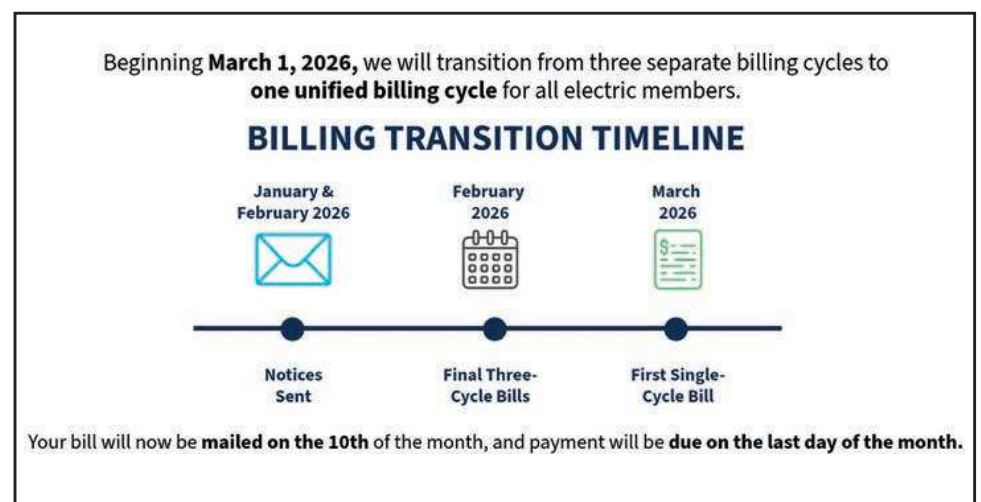
least seven years. Instead of filing or throwing out your monthly bill, you can have convenient virtual access. These programs give you peace of mind that you will always have access to your account, and through successful automatic payments, you will not be charged late fees or incur additional costs related to service disconnection.

Lastly, this change impacts your electric service from PPCS. SwiftCurrent Connect will continue to bill on the 1st of each month.

While this billing change will take some getting used to, we expect this transition to go smoothly. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to our member service department.

As we move into February, we are finalizing our plans around construction projects for 2026 and preparing for another busy season of connecting our members to SwiftCurrent Connect. We encourage members who are looking to get connected, have new electric service projects, or may be looking for electrician work to contact us now so we can plan for these projects.

2026 will be a great year for the co-op, we look forward to seeing you at one of our many events.



# WE OUR MEMBERS

February is a month centered on connection, care, and appreciation, and at Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services, it's a perfect time to say what we believe all year long: we truly value our members. As a cooperative, you're not just a customer, you're a member-owner. That means every decision we make, every mile of line we maintain, and every program we invest in is guided by one simple question: How does this serve our members and community? That belief is rooted in the Seven Cooperative Principles, which shape who we are and how we operate.

## FROM THE HEART OF YOUR COOPERATIVE

### Voluntary & Open Membership

Our cooperative is built on inclusivity. Anyone who lives in our service territory can become a member, and everyone is welcome here. We're proud to serve a diverse group of families, farms, and businesses connected by shared ownership and community pride.

### Education, Training & Information

We believe informed members are empowered members. From safety tips and energy efficiency education to youth programs and scholarships, we're committed to sharing knowledge that helps our members make confident decisions.

### Democratic Member Control

As a member-owner, you have a voice. Through board elections and participation, you help guide the direction of your cooperative. Your input matters, and we value the trust you place in fellow members who serve as your elected representatives.

### Cooperation Among Cooperatives

We're stronger together. By working with other cooperatives, we're able to share resources, ideas, and innovation, ensuring we continue delivering safe, reliable, and future-focused service.

### Members' Economic Participation

Unlike for-profit utilities, we reinvest locally. Any margins earned are returned to members as capital credits or used to strengthen the system that serves you. That means your dollars stay close to home to support infrastructure, reliability, and long-term affordability.

### Concern for Community

This principle is at the heart of everything we do. From supporting local food pantries and schools to investing in community programs and charitable initiatives, we're proud to give back to the places our members call home.

### Autonomy & Independence

We are locally governed and community focused. While we work with trusted partners to provide reliable power and services, decisions are made right here with our members' best interests at heart.

***This Valentine's Day, we want you to know how much we appreciate the trust you place in us. Whether it's keeping the lights on during a winter storm or supporting the community beyond the meter, we're honored to serve you.***

**Thank you for being part of our cooperative. Thank you for being part of our community. And most of all, thank you for being a member of PPCS.**





## NEED HELP PAYING YOUR ENERGY BILL?

PPCS' Commitment to Community program offers energy assistance to low-income individuals or families who are electric members of PPCS. If you need assistance, start by contacting the Department of Human Services for the county in which you reside. If you qualify through the county, you will be eligible for a voucher to be applied to your PPCS electric bill.

Buffalo County: 608-685-4412

Pierce, Pepin & St. Croix Counties: 715-265-4271

For more information, contact our billing coordinator at 715-273-4355, 800-924-2133, or [info@piercepepin.coop](mailto:info@piercepepin.coop).



# SAVE THE DATE

# 89TH

# ANNUAL MEETING

April 9, 2026 5:00 P.M.  
Ellsworth High School  
323 Hillcrest Street, Ellsworth, WI

 **SWIFTCURRENT**  
CONNECT



**STAY CONNECTED TO WHAT  
(AND WHO) YOU LOVE!**



# EV WINTER DRIVING GUIDE

**E**Vs can be affected by extreme temperatures, especially the cold, but they're built to handle winter conditions like any other vehicle. Just like gas-powered cars, EVs lose some efficiency when temperatures drop.

**Battery performance:** EVs use lithium-ion batteries. These store and release energy by moving lithium ions through a liquid electrolyte between the battery's two main parts: the anode (negative side) and the cathode (positive side). During charging, ions move from the anode to the cathode. While driving, ions move back from the cathode to the anode to power the car. Cold weather thickens this "liquid highway," slowing the ions; batteries take longer to charge and can drain faster.

**Cabin heating:** Gas vehicles produce waste heat that can be redirected to warm the cabin. EVs don't. Instead, the battery powers the heater, defrosters and extras like seat warmers — draining more energy. This extra demand can reduce range.

## Boost EV Efficiency in Cold Weather

Cold weather doesn't have to leave you stranded. These simple tips can preserve your range and insure that your EV gets you where you need to go this winter.

**Precondition before driving:** Many EVs let you warm the cabin and battery while plugged in. Schedule this to finish right before you leave.

**Install a Level 2 charger:** These charge fast and work well for scheduled charging and preheating, especially on freezing nights.

**Prioritize heated surfaces:** Heated seats and steering wheels use far less power than blasting the cabin heat.

**Check tire pressure:** Cold air lowers tire pressure, reducing traction and efficiency. Keep tires at recommended PSI levels.

**Drive gently:** Avoid rapid acceleration, reduce speed, and use regenerative braking when you can.



**Protect outdoor charging gear:** While charging connectors are waterproof, heavy snow or ice can cause them to freeze. Use a magnetic connector cover or bag to prevent freezing.

Like any vehicle, EVs need a little extra attention in the winter. With preparation — from charging habits to smart driving — EVs can handle even the coldest days and keep you moving when it matters most.

*Source: SafeElectricity.org*

## SHIFT for Savings

Reduce non-essential energy use from 7 to 11 a.m. and 5 to 9 p.m.

Together, we can lower demand and help keep rates stable.



**Nate Boettcher, President & CEO**  
**Emily Keeler, Editor**

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**Power Outages and Emergencies:** 800-927-5705