

Since 1940

WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* NEWS

September 2025



PIERCE PEPIN

COOPERATIVE SERVICES

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

POLLINATOR PATH WITH A PURPOSE

**WHAT SETS CO-OPS APART
FROM OTHER POWER PROVIDERS**

PIE FOR DINNER

KIDS AND CRITTERS





LIVE BETTER, MORE THAN JUST A CATCHY SLOGAN

Nate Boettcher, President and CEO



Six years ago, I attended my first “unofficial” board meeting at PPCS. Having been hired by the PPCS board of directors, but not officially starting until October 1, the board asked me to join their meeting. During that meeting, the tagline “Live Better” caught my eye, but it took a few months to sink in. I thought to myself, is the cooperative incorporating that into everything they do? Is this the mission statement?

Cooperatives have a rich history, steeped in tradition, with a disposition to talk about the days the lights came on in rural Wisconsin. There are probably very few members who recall getting electricity in those first few years as most of us have grown up with modern conveniences powered by electricity. The day the cooperative made the decision to invest in broadband and provide a powerful new connection, it reaffirmed its commitment not only to serving its members but also to helping our members Live Better.

Throughout my career, I have seen where cooperatives lose sight of their

purpose. They become self-serving entities, more focused on their own growth rather than the growth of their member-owners. They become fixated on keeping up with their peers, rather than serving their neighbors. They focus more on being confidential than focusing on being transparent and providing correct information. In each of these situations, you can ask yourself one simple question: Are these things helping their members Live Better?

We use two different measurements to help us track whether we are living up to our purpose. The first is the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), which measures customer satisfaction. The second is the Net Promoter Score, primarily used with SwiftCurrent Connect, as a measurement of customer loyalty. Both indices help us benchmark against our peers. The results of our 2025 ACSI score are in, and we are proud to announce that our cooperative achieved a score of 80 out of 100. Our ranking is four points ahead of the average co-op, five points better than the average municipal utility, and six points

better than the average investor-owned utility. In fact, our nearest investor-owned utility scored four points less than PPCS.

While we are proud of these scores, there is more work to be done to help our members Live Better. We’ve recently launched a great on-bill financing program, and we are continuing to work on improving our methods to serve you efficiently. At the end of the day, we also know that your electricity rate and reliability are important. Investing in our system helps to keep rates flat and drive new revenue to the cooperative, which allows us to invest in grid resiliency.

My pledge to you on behalf of the board and our employees is that we will do whatever it takes to help you Live Better. Our team is committed to this very basic idea. After six years, it’s no longer a question of whether we incorporate this into everything we do, but rather a commitment and focus of helping our members Live Better each day that drives us. We hope you have a great fall and a good harvest!

PPCS periodically sends important messages to our members regarding construction projects, line clearance projects, SHIFT for Savings alerts, and other relevant updates. Stay informed by signing up for SmartHub today and selecting your preferred notification method. Learn more at www.piercepepin.coop/smarthub.



DID YOU KNOW?

Friendly Reminder

If you’re sending mail to PPCS or SwiftCurrent Connect, please use the following address to ensure prompt delivery.

PPCS/SwiftCurrent Connect
PO Box 420
Ellsworth, WI 54011-0420

LET'S CELEBRATE CO-OP MONTH IN STYLE!

October is National Co-op Month—and this year, it's extra special! We're not only celebrating the power of cooperatives, but also joining the excitement of the International Year of Cooperatives. To mark the occasion, PPCS is hosting a special event each week, and you're invited! Here's what's coming up:



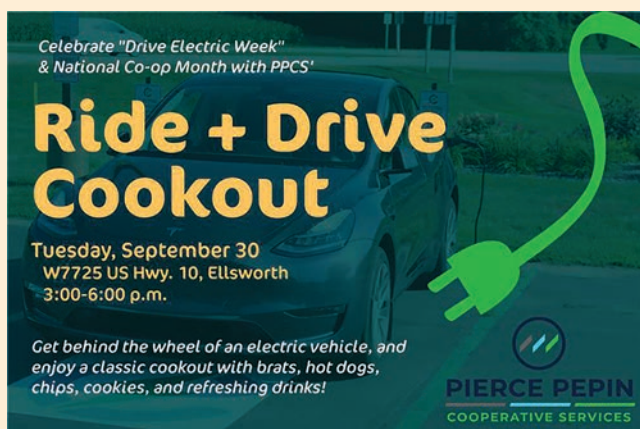
International Year of Cooperatives

Cooperatives Build a Better World

Week 1: EV Ride & Drive + Cookout

Tuesday, September 30 | 3:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Get behind the wheel of an electric vehicle and enjoy a classic cookout with brats, hot dogs, chips, cookies, and refreshing drinks!



Week 2: Pie & Ice Cream Social

Friday, October 10 | 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Satisfy your sweet tooth and catch up with fellow members over delicious pie and ice cream.

Week 3: Coffee at the Co-op

Friday, October 17 | 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Start your morning with fresh coffee, yummy donuts, good company, and great conversation at your co-op.

Week 4: Member Appreciation Pancake Breakfast

Saturday, October 25 | 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.

We're flipping pancakes and serving up gratitude! Join us for a hearty breakfast as we celebrate YOU — our valued members.

Bonus!

Each event you attend earns you an entry into our year-end prize drawing for a chance to win one of three \$100 bill credits! Keep an eye out for more details in the October issue of *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News*.

LEAD THE WAY: JOIN YOUR CO-OP'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Want to make a difference in your community? Serving on the board of your electric cooperative is a powerful way to make a meaningful impact. The cooperative has three districts with three directors representing each district.



Why Run?

- » Make an Impact: Help shape decisions that affect your neighbors and local businesses.
- » Promote Transparency: Support open, accountable governance.
- » Share Your Skills: Bring your expertise to the table and help guide the co-op's future.

Learn more at our Director Candidate Information Session:

Tuesday, October 21, at 6:30 p.m.

PPCS Office – W7725 US Highway 10, Ellsworth
Contact Charity Lubich at 715-273-4355, ext. 2451, or clubich@piercepepin.coop to RSVP.

Director Duties & Responsibilities

Who is on the board?

The board of directors consists of nine cooperative members, three from each of the three cooperative districts.

What does a director do?

A director represents all members of Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services and is responsible for approving general policies, annual budgets, special contracts, capital credit allocations and retirements, bylaw amendments, rate schedules, and delegating authority to the president and CEO to carry out the cooperative's daily activities.

When does the board meet?

The board of directors meets the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Is there any compensation?

Directors are paid a per diem for each meeting attended, as well as IRS-approved mileage.

What is the time commitment?

Typically, 24-30 days/evenings per year are dedicated to monthly board meetings, training, and workshops.



AREA STUDENTS SHARPEN LEADERSHIP SKILLS AT YLC



Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services (PPCS) was proud to sponsor area high school students at the Youth Leadership Conference (YLC) held on the UW-Stout campus from July 15 to 17, 2025. Two Ellsworth students joined over 80 other teens from Wisconsin for the event.

Understanding the cooperative difference and identifying traits of leaders were just two of the topics highlighted at the 62nd YLC. Students participated in team-building exercises, leadership workshops, learning sessions, and presentations on cooperative history, organization, and principles. Attendees learned about the basics of cooperatives and how they can apply the ideals and philosophies of cooperation to their everyday lives. These young leaders also got a taste of campus life, made new friends, and heard firsthand how they can make a positive impact in their schools and communities.

Students who attended YLC this July described the experience as unforgettable and inspiring. EHS Junior Eli Grand shared, “Everyone was so kindhearted—it was hard to leave,” adding, “I learned how many things are co-ops, and how they are for the people, here to help the community. I wish more kids signed up.” Victoria Ellis, also a Junior at EHS, echoed

the sentiment, saying, “My roommate and I cried on the last day. I definitely recommend it to other students—I want to go back next year.” She also shared her excitement about getting involved, having run for the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association (WECA) Youth Board: “I hope to run again next year and get on the board!”

The YLC is a fun, educational, and unique event that is planned by the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association (WECA) Youth Board. The Youth Board is a group of six students,

elected annually by their peers. The Youth Board can visit Washington, D.C. as part of the National Youth Tour, where they continue to learn about cooperatives and government. The Youth Board will also plan and execute the Youth Leadership Conference for 2026.

Students who participated in YLC are also eligible to earn scholarships from WECA and PPCS. To qualify for scholarships from PPCS, students must also be entering their senior year of high school, and their parents or guardians must be members of PPCS.



PUT NEW INTERNET ON YOUR SHOPPING LIST

Old school classics like notebooks and colored pencils are still around. But new school technology has moved to the head of the class, with most homework now being done on tablets or laptops rather than paper.

To help your student succeed, consider upgrading to an A+ internet plan from SwiftCurrent Connect. We offer super-fast speeds and unmatched reliability, so the only thing getting in the way of completing homework efficiently will be texts from friends!

CALL 715-350-7033 FOR AN INTERNET UPGRADE



W7725 US HWY10, Ellsworth, WI 54011
715-350-7033 • www.swiftcurrent.coop

DRIVING FROM BEHIND FARM EQUIPMENT: DO YOUR PART

Spring planting and fall harvest are busy times. Farmers and workers have big equipment and implements on the road. Navigating roadways can be dangerous for farm equipment operators and auto drivers who follow behind them.

Hundreds of farmers and agricultural workers die from work-related injuries each year. Transportation incidents, which include tractor overturns, are often the leading cause of death.

Follow these safety tips to ensure a safer environment for everyone involved.

Equipment operators:

1. Make sure all flashers and lights are operational.
2. Drive as far to the right side of the road as possible when going around a curve.
3. Pull over and allow vehicles to pass when traffic builds up behind you.
4. Take care at railroad crossings.
5. Avoid traveling during busy traffic times.
6. Be mindful of the height and width of machinery, watching power lines, bridges, and other hazards.
7. Along with turn signals, use hand signals.
8. Stay rested; do not drive when you are too tired or hungry.
9. Keep a first-aid kit in case of accidents.

Auto drivers:

1. Think about how long it will take to get to your destination and add extra time for busy farm roads.

2. Give farmers plenty of room on the road. If a piece of equipment takes up the entire road, pull into a driveway or area and wait for it to pass.
3. When passing, be sure you do so in a passing zone and that there is clear visibility around farm equipment. Watch for oncoming vehicles.
4. Go slow. Farm operators often stop or turn into fields. In addition, cars traveling at or exceeding the speed limit can quickly catch up to farm machinery, as farmers often move slowly in their equipment.
5. Do not assume that a farmer can move over in narrow areas; it is not always possible.
6. Honk or motion when passing farmers; they may not see you or know you are there; their equipment is big and noisy.
7. Do not tailgate; the farmer often



cannot see you.

8. Do not pass and then slow suddenly in front of equipment with implements behind it or farm trucks full of grain. They cannot stop quickly.
9. Farmers make very wide turns; give them plenty of time and room.

These are a few tips to make it safer for both the equipment operator and auto drivers, and to provide a more pleasant driving experience for all.

For information about safety around electricity, including farm and ranch safety, visit safeelectricity.org.

Source: Safeelectricity.org



Nate Boettcher, President & CEO
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Follow us on Facebook, X, and Instagram
Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Power Outages and Emergencies: 800-927-5705