

THE POWER OF LOCAL OWNERSHIP

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March, 2012



As much as half of the energy used in your home goes to heating and cooling. The second largest energy user is most often the water heater. So making smart decisions about your home's heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) system, as well as your water heater, can have a big effect on your utility bills - and your comfort. If your HVAC equipment or water heater is more than 10 years old or not keeping your house comfortable, you should have it looked at by a professional HVAC contractor and consider replacing it with a high-efficiency model. Focus on Energy offers cash-back rewards for qualifying high-efficiency furnaces, boilers, and water heaters. Log onto focusonenergy.com or call 1-800-762-7077 for details.

THE CITY OF RICE LAKE IS CELEBRATING 125 YEARS AS A CITY!!

Whether you have visited or lived in the City of Rice Lake for 125 years, months, hours, minutes or seconds, you have reason to celebrate!! The kick off to the 125th "Good Times" birthday celebration will begin on Sunday, April 1st, 2012 at Rice Lake City Hall at 1:25 p.m. (for 125 minutes). Some of the events planned for the day are a proclamation from the mayor, a historical slide show, the unveiling of the celebration plans, a chance to purchase official merchandise and the opportunity to sign up for contests and events that are planned for the 125th day celebration. There will also be a sign up sheet for volunteers and ambassadors that are needed to represent the City of Rice Lake. Some of the events include a huge parade that will take place on August 4th, 2012 with a post-celebration planned at the fairgrounds immediately after.

Rice Lake had its beginning in 1864 when Knapp, Stout and Company constructed a storage dam on the site of an earlier Indian village and a wild rice bed, taking the name of the community from that location. A mill was started at the dam in 1871 by M.W. Heller, who was the first permanent settler to move his family here. Heller was also in charge of the first store, hotel and blacksmith shop, which made the settlement the center for northern operations of Knapp, Stout and Company until the large stands of white pines in the area were exhausted. The original plat of the city included a 100-foot wide thoroughfare that is still the heart of the business district. On April 1, 1887, the city of Rice Lake was incorporated as a city. Commemorative buttons are also available for \$2 at Rice Lake City Hall and Rice Lake Utilities.



CONSUMER/OWNERS CAN NOW MANAGE THEIR UTILITY ACCOUNT ONLINE

Consumer/owners can now view their bill due date, payment history, current balances and consumption history by service, just by accessing our online bill payment website at www.municipalonlinepayments.com/ ricelakeutilitieswi or by following a link on our web page www.ricelakeutilities.com. The first time logging on you will need to know your utility account number as well as the last payment amount that was made. If you do choose to use this as a payment method please keep in mind that there will be a small transaction fee imposed. For other bill pay options please refer to the back of your billing statement.

Remember to always call before digging

Planning yard work this summer? Remember to call Diggers Hotline at 811. Their locaters will mark the underground utilities at no fee. You can also email in your locate by logging onto www.diggershotline.com.



In observance of Good Friday, Rice Lake Utilities will be closed on Friday, April 6th. Our phone lines will still be answered by Gold Cross Services in Eau Claire who will dispatch personnel in an emergency. All non-emergency matters will be handled on Monday April 9th during regular business hours.

Kill a Watt™ meters are now available at the Rice Lake Public Library

Now you can identify those power hungry appliances in your home and save money with the help of the Rice Lake Public Library and Rice Lake Utilities. Rice Lake Utilities has donated two Kill a Watt™ meters that are now available at the Rice Lake Public Library on a weekly loan basis and can be checked out just like a library book. The meters can monitor the electrical consumption of any 120 volt electrical appliance, such as refrigerators, microwaves, televisions and ovens and give the user an idea of how energy efficient the appliance is by calculating how much energy the appliance is using. It will also tell you how much it will cost to run the appliance for a week, month or even a year. While you're at the library you may also want to check out a few of these energy saving books that are available: *The Homeowner's Handbook to Energy Efficiency* by John Krigger-call number 644 KRI. *Landscaping that Saves Energy and Dollars* by Ruth Foster-call number 712.2 FOS. *Green Your Home* by Jeanne Roberts-call number 643 ROB.

*A library card will be needed to check out the Kill a Watt™ meters.

Rice Lake Utilities prepares for disconnection of residential electric service effective April 15th



If you have fallen behind in your utility payments, Rice Lake Utilities may be able to offer you a deferred payment plan that will help you pay your current bill and any past due amounts owed. You also may be eligible for emergency fuel assistance. To find out, please contact the Barron County Energy Assistance office at 537-5691.

Summer Storms arrive early



Staying safe during the spring and summer storm season is about more than taking shelter in rough weather. It also means avoiding hazards a violent storm leaves behind. For example, nearly every severe storm manages to bring down power lines. To stay safe, stay away. **DO NOT APPROACH ANY DOWNED LINES.** You cannot tell if a line is live simply by looking at it. Report downed lines by calling Rice Lake Utilities or 911. It is especially important to immediately report sparking lines because they pose a fire hazard. It's difficult to tell electric lines from telecommunications lines, which often share a common pole. Lines that normally do not carry dangerous current can become conductors when entangled with power lines. **TREAT ANY FALLEN LINE AS DANGEROUS.**

RICE LAKE UTILITIES

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