

THE POWER OF LOCAL OWNERSHIP

Community Minded

Community Proud

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March, 2009

How do you measure up?



Take the Energy Star Yardstick Challenge and find out. The Home Energy Yardstick compares a household's energy use to similar homes and gives it a score of 0-10. With 10 being the most energy efficient. All you need is your annual or monthly utility costs and the square footage of your home. Log onto www.energystar.gov and click on the *home improvement* link and *Home Energy Yardstick* to begin.

City of Rice Lake adopts the State of Wisconsin's 25X25 goals.



At their February meeting, the Rice Lake City Council passed resolution 09-03 supporting the State of Wisconsin's goal of replacing 25% of its electric power and transportation fuels from renewable resources by 2025. By passing this resolution, the City of Rice Lake is also committed to advancing the State of Wisconsin's vision for energy independence by generating 25% of the city's electricity and 25% of its transportation fuels from renewable resources by 2025.

This resolution already embraces the approaches and solutions that Rice Lake Utilities is currently exploring, it will however, open the door to additional state and federal funding and technical assistance. It also helps to involve the participation from the entire city to act as one unit towards achieving the same goal of energy reduction and impact.

...generating 25% of the city's electricity and 25% of its transportation fuels from renewable resources by 2025.

One of the projects of interest that's currently being studied is hydro electric generation at the Red Cedar Dam in Rice Lake. It's becoming more and more feasible to install a turbine on the river and is currently under research. The available capacity is roughly 1.7 million kwh per year. The amount of electricity that could be generated from the dam may be small in comparison to the 158,504,000 kwh that our consumer/owners used last year, however it could add another one percent to our renewable energy portfolio.

Wind energy is another concept that has been looked at as well. A wind energy assessment has been performed and it was determined that Rice Lake is not an area where wind would be a substantial form of renewable energy. However, we could generate a modest amount of electricity, but the cost may outweigh the benefit without significant grant funding.



Please join us for refreshments in our lobby
May 4th-8th, 2009
as we celebrate National Drinking Water Week.

Rice Lake Utilities Rates Are Counted Among The Lowest In The State.

Rice Lake Utilities is proud to announce that Rice Lake Utilities electric rates ranked as the 10th lowest out of 94 electric utilities required to report to the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin and according to the *2008 Wisconsin Community Water & Sewer Rate Survey* conducted by Municipal Economics and Planning, Rice Lake Utilities came in at the 24th lowest out of 303 water utilities and 7th lowest out of 312 wastewater utilities.

*Rice Lake Utilities is planning on increasing the water and sewer rates in the near future. However, even after these increases, our consumer/owners will still enjoy some of the lowest rates in the entire state. The current water rates have been in effect since August of 2001 and current sewer rates since October of 1991.

Ordinary citizens accomplishing extraordinary results.

In 1987 the Rice Lake City Council created a five member utility commission comprised of consumer/owners to oversee the electric, water and wastewater utilities as a separate business unit under the city. At that time all three utilities were in debt and had failing infrastructure. With a lot of hard work and dedication over the last 20 years, the commissioners and employees have steadily created a legacy of cost effectiveness, reliability and top notch customer service that benefits all of the consumer/owners of Rice Lake Utilities.

ELECTRIC-At the onset of their formation, the commission authorized almost a complete rebuilding of the electrical system, including a new state of the art substation. By implementing and achieving this goal, they have increased reliability, safety and integrity of the electrical system second to none, all while keeping costs to a minimum. Thanks to their efforts, consumer/owners of Rice Lake Utilities now enjoy **99.9% electric reliability**.

WATER-Thanks to the commissioners oversight, Rice Lake Utilities water supply has been recognized on several occasions for it's great taste and was voted as the "best tasting water in the state" in 2003. In 2005, the water utility was the proud recipient of the Wisconsin Water Association's Small System Excellence Award.

WASTEWATER-The commission is responsible for Rice Lake Utilities compliance of strict environmental standards and ever changing DNR regulations. A major upgrade is set to begin this year at the wastewater treatment plant with the majority of funding coming from an account that was put in place at the time of the last upgrade, therefore minimizing future rate increases to our consumer/owners.

Rice Lake Utilities Prepares For Disconnection of Residential Electric Service Effective April 15th, 2009.



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.

Water Run Notice Set to Expire On March 31st.



Now that spring has sprung all water customers can now discontinue running a pencil stream of water to avoid freeze ups. The Rice Lake Water Department would like to say thank you for your cooperation during this period.

April 20-24th is Severe Weather Awareness Week.



On April 23rd between 1:40-1:45 pm the **National Weather Service Minneapolis/Chanhassen** will issue a **mock tornado warning** for Barron, Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Rusk and St. Croix Counties. If actual severe weather occurs anywhere in the state the tornado drill will be postponed until Friday, April 24 with the watch/warnings issued at the same time.

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