

THE POWER OF LOCAL OWNERSHIP

Community Minded

Community Proud

Community Owned



September, 2017

Public Power Week is October 1st-7th, 2017



Rice Lake Utilities would like to invite our consumer/owners to help us celebrate Public Power Week October 1st-7th, 2017. Public Power Week is a national event sponsored in conjunction with the American Public Power Association (APPA). APPA is the service organization for the community and state owned electric utilities. Rice Lake Utilities is part of this organization as well as a member of the Municipal Electric Utilities of Wisconsin (MEUW). MEUW utilities are 81 strong in Wisconsin and distribute over 11 percent of electricity to Wisconsinites. Most MEUW utilities have roots going back nearly a century or more. We all operate on a not-for-profit basis and our business affairs are conducted in an open forum. Our commissioners consist of local consumer/owners in the community who directly make the decisions that impact not only other consumer/owners but themselves as well. By being part of a not-for-profit entity, Rice Lake Utilities is able to keep our rates among the lowest in our area. We also pride ourselves on our history of providing reliable service while keeping our costs to a minimum.

Please join us the week of October 1st-7th as we say thank you to our consumer/owners. As part of our week-long celebration, we will have refreshments in our lobby along with a chance to win great door prizes.

Emil Rohrssen is named Wastewater Operator of the Year!



Pictured left to right: Larry Reinke, Chairperson of the Northwest Wastewater Operators Association and Emil Rohrssen.

The Regional Operator of the Year Award is given out to someone who has demonstrated excellent plant performance, and/or successful solution to a problem, and/or contributions to the wastewater field. It is open to Wisconsin Certified Operators of municipal, industrial, or institutional wastewater treatment facilities. Emil, who recently retired, started his career in 1976 after graduating from Rice Lake High School. Emil worked at the wastewater treatment plant and has been involved in almost every aspect of Rice Lake Utilities since its inception. No words can express Emil's level of commitment, dedication, and loyalty in his 40-year career. 41 years later he continues to school many new operators with his knowledge of the system that only someone of his years could know. Even in his retirement, when a question comes up about the water distribution system or the wastewater collection system Emil is still the go-to person for the answer to the question. Emil holds a grade 4 operator certification which is the highest level a wastewater operator can be certified in

Wisconsin. We are so proud to have him named as the Wastewater Operator of the Year. His high quality of service, as well as his contributions to the consumer/owners of Rice Lake Utilities, are greatly valued and well respected. Congratulations Emil on receiving this prestigious award!! We are all so happy and proud of you. Thank you for being with us through the years.

LOCAL CONTROL

Unlike private power companies, public power utilities are public service institutions and do not serve stockholders. Instead, our mission is to serve our consumer/owners. We measure success by how much money stays within the community through low rates and contributions to the city budget through payments in lieu of taxes, not how much goes out to stockholders across the country and around the world. Rice Lake Utilities consists of a five member commission that is composed of business owners and citizens of the Rice Lake Community. The decisions they make for the consumer/owners are also applicable to them.

COMMUNITY VALUES

Back in 1929 when Rice Lake Utilities was formed by the citizens of the community, the main goal, which is still in existence today, was to keep rates low and customer service high. Not much has changed with that way of thinking. Rice Lake Utilities' top priority is enhancing community value. By existing in the community in which they serve, municipal utilities create jobs and support the local economy. In 2016 Rice Lake Utilities made payments in lieu of taxes to the City of Rice Lake that totaled over five hundred thousand dollars. Rice Lake Utilities' contribution to the tax base allows the city to respond to the community's needs, build on the community's strengths, and reflect the community's values.



RELIABILITY

Reliability is job number one. We work tirelessly to keep the power on and restore it quickly when outages occur. In an age of advanced grid technologies and cyber threats, the challenge is greater than ever. When outages happen, public power utilities have a strong reliability record - through continued training and ongoing preventative care, Rice Lake Utilities electric crews are prepared to act quickly and safely to restore power to the consumer/owners of Rice Lake Utilities. Rice Lake Utilities lineworkers are dedicated and passionate about serving the Rice Lake community because it's where they live and work. When outages occur in the middle of the night, they don't have far to go to get to work or to the scene of the problem. Rice Lake Utilities has received national recognition for reliable electric power service from the American Public Power Association.

AFFORDABILITY

On a national basis, private power residential customers pay average electricity rates that are about 13 percent more than those paid by public power customers. On average, public power utilities return to state and local governments in-lieu-of-tax payments and other contributions that are 31 percent greater than state and local taxes paid by private power companies. Rice Lake Utilities has worked diligently to keep electric rates affordable for our citizens. We have negotiated a power supply contract well into the future. By locking in rates we are saving millions of dollars for our consumer/owners per year. Rice Lake Utilities is consistently among the lowest rates in the entire State of Wisconsin and on average pay 40.63% less than our closest private power competitor.

SUPERIOR SERVICE

Rice Lake Utilities takes great pride in our customer service to our consumer/owners. In a day and age when technology is ever advancing, we still believe in a balance of technology and old school customer service. You won't receive an automated attendant when you call us during regular business hours but rather a real person who is dedicated to helping you with any questions, concerns, or needs you may have. We are proud to offer walk-in customer service. You won't come to the Rice Lake Utilities office to find a closed door that says employees only. We keep our doors open from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. each weekday excluding certain holidays throughout the year, to be there exclusively for our consumer/owners. Sure it might be easier to have an automated attendant answer a call or conduct business exclusively over the phone and the internet, but that's not what makes us special and that's not what we think is best for our consumer/owners. Our goal is to be accountable to you and to provide every benefit that a public utility can give back to the community in which it serves. To coin an old phrase, WE WILL LEAVE A LIGHT ON FOR YOU!

Please remember school buses are back on the roads!

- * Respect the big yellow bus. Imagine being in a large car with 40 noisy 6th-graders. Could be pretty stressful. Do your part and make the bus drivers' lives easier.
- * Get in the zone. Speed limits in the City of Rice Lake school zones typically range between 15 and 25 mph.
- * Drivers aren't the only ones who need to obey the rules of the road. A major driving pet peeve is pedestrians who jaywalk, cross at a red light, or text while walking. More than an annoyance, this is a danger, especially in school zones.

