

Annual Conference includes celebration of individuals, utilities

The long history of recognizing individuals who champion the values of public power will continue as MEUW honors several individuals at the association's 95th Annual Conference, which will be held May 14–16 in La Crosse. The awards will be presented during a ceremony on Thursday, May 15. In addition to the individual honors, 43 organizations are being recognized for their safety performance in 2024.

"The individuals and utilities MEUW will be recognizing embody the association's mission to unify and strengthen community-owned utilities in Wisconsin," said MEUW President and CEO Tim Heinrich. "Honoring the people who demonstrate a commitment to public power is important to MEUW's continued and long-term success."

This year, MEUW is honoring two individuals — Andy Onesti of Manitowoc Public Utilities and Duane Vandermause of JD Mause, LLC — with Meritorious Service Awards. This award is presented to individuals to recognize outstanding service/achievement or other recognizable acts while an employee of an MEUW member utility, or in service to MEUW and its members.

Exemplary Service Awards will be presented to Waterloo Utilities Office Manager Joy Bisco and Menasha Utilities General Manager Melanie Krause. This award recognizes outstanding service/achievement or other recognizable acts, including contributions to MEUW through committee meetings and groups.

The Excellence in Line Work Award celebrates individuals who consistently demonstrate dedication to their profession as a lineworker. It recognizes municipal utility employees who are committed to the trade and exceptional technical proficiency. This year, two individuals are being honored — Ryan Pelowski from Trempealeau Municipal Electric & Water Utility and Andrew Ruder of Stoughton Utilities.

MEUW Retirement Awards will be given to four individuals in recognition of their service to their utilities and to MEUW through board and/or

committee participation. Former MEUW Board Chair Rick Wicklund of Sun Prairie Utilities will receive recognition, as will Dave Euclide of Sun Prairie Utilities and Lori Nyhus of Cumberland Utilities, both long-time members of MEUW's Accounting and Customer



Service Committee. Greg Buckley, Two Rivers City Manager, also will be recognized for his upcoming retirement and to show appreciation of his many years of service to public power.

Utilities honored for safety excellence

Forty-three member utilities will be presented with the MEUW Safety Achievement Award, which has been presented since 1999 to recognize safety performance and to encourage proactive safety activities.

Awards are given based on voluntary reporting and recognizes the municipal

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utilities' dedication to employees' on-the-job focus: following safety rules, using safe work practices and looking out for one another.

The Award also acknowledges the commitment of management and the utility governing board to ensuring an environment that supports safe operations. This includes providing employees with the equipment they need to do the job safely as well as the training to maintain or improve skills.

Award recipients are placed in categories — gold, silver and bronze — based on scoring against key criteria that promote a strong safety culture. *See list of honorees below.*

Individuals honored for support of public power



Andy Onesti is Chief Innovation Officer at Manitowoc Public Utilities (MPU), having joined as Power Supply Manager 17 years ago. He has more than 35 years of experience in municipal electric utilities, starting his career at Shawano Municipal Utilities (SMU) as a Meter Tester before advancing to an Electrical Engineer position and concluding his final four years as SMU's General Manager prior to joining MPU. Andy's extensive experience in utility design, electric distribution systems, and power supply planning

has helped pioneer a multi-year project to refuel two existing primarily fossil fuel-fired power plants to run exclusively on Wisconsin-recognized 100% renewable densified fuel pellets.



Duane Vandermause is a contract Engineer/Assistant Director of Public Works for the City of Lake Mills. He is a professional civil engineer with membership in American Public Works Association (APWA) and the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) with more than 35 years of experience consulting on numerous municipal infrastructure projects in Wisconsin. In his spare time Duane has an interest in the stock market, traveling, and sports activities.

has helped pioneer a multi-year project to refuel two existing primarily fossil fuel-fired power plants to run exclusively on Wisconsin-recognized 100% renewable densified fuel pellets.



Joy Bisco has worked at Waterloo Utilities for 10 years, starting as Utility Accountant and then becoming Office Manager. She has helped advance the utility by helping implement new software and products that streamline the way the office and Waterloo Utilities as a whole runs. As the person responsible for the utility's accounting, she has also helped Commission members better understand the ins and outs of utility finances so they can make educated decisions for the Utility. She has an associate degree in Accounting and earned the Joint Action Leadership Certificate from WPPI Energy, where she serves on the Board as the Alternate from Waterloo.

She represents her district in northeast Wisconsin as a member of the MEUW Board of Directors. She also has been involved in numerous other advisory groups as a Board member for WPPI Energy, where she serves on the Executive Committee.



Melanie Krause has worked in municipal utilities for more than 25 years. She started with Menasha Utilities in June 1997 as the Business Operations Accountant. In 2005 she became the Manager of Business Operations and then was Co-General Manager in 2010 when engineering and business operations were split. She was named to her current role as General Manager in September 2013.

She represents her district in northeast Wisconsin as a member of the MEUW Board of Directors. She also has been involved in numerous other advisory groups as a Board member for WPPI Energy, where she serves on the Executive Committee.

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2025 Safety Achievement Award Honorees

GOLD Category

Boscobel Utilities
Cedarburg Light and Water Commission
Clintonville Utilities
Columbus Utilities
Eagle River Light & Water
Elroy Electric Utility
Evansville Water & Light
Fennimore Municipal Utilities
Florence Municipal Utilities
Hartford Utilities
Hustisford Utilities
Juneau Utilities Commission
Kaukauna Utilities
Lake Mills Utilities
Lodi Utilities
Marshfield Utilities

City of Medford
Menasha Utilities
Muscoda Utilities
Oconomowoc Utilities
Oconto Falls Municipal Utilities
Plymouth Utilities
Prairie du Sac Electric Utility
Rice Lake Utilities
City Utilities of Richland Center
Sauk City Utilities
Sun Prairie Utilities
Trempealeau Municipal Utility
Two Rivers Water & Light
Waunakee Utilities
Waupun Utilities
Wisconsin Rapids Water Works & Lighting Commission

SILVER Category

Arcadia Electric Utility
City of Cuba City
Cumberland Municipal Utility
Gresham Municipal Utility
Manitowoc Public Utilities
New Holstein Utilities
New Lisbon Utilities
New London Utilities
River Falls Municipal Utilities
Shawano Municipal Utilities
Stoughton Utilities
Vanguard Electric

If you're interested in attending the May 15 Awards Luncheon, registration is available [here](#).

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Ryan Pelowski, Lead Lineman for Trempealeau Municipal Utilities (TMU), has 19 years of experience with municipal utilities, with 16 years at

TMU and 3 years with Bangor Municipal Utilities. He is a member of MEUW's Safety and Education committee and assisted with the 4th year Journeyman's testing at Chippewa Valley Technical College this year, which has been a long-term goal of his. Ryan truly is a practitioner of leading by example and continues to raise the bar and strive for higher standards and performance.



Andrew Ruder is a Journeyman Lineworker at Stoughton Utilities, where he has worked for 10 years. He started his career as an apprentice fol-

lowing his graduation from Northeast Wisconsin Technical College. He was nominated for this honor, in part, due to his commendable character. Andy's optimistic attitude and approachable demeanor contribute to a supportive team environment, promoting a culture of safety and a strong commitment to both individual careers and the team's overall success. He regularly volunteers for activities outside of the normal workday to help support the team and community. Andy was also among the lineworkers who traveled to

provide mutual aid following Hurricane Milton in 2024 in Lakeland, Florida.

Those receiving individual honors were nominated by MEUW stakeholders, and the nominations were reviewed by members of the Awards Committee, which is chaired by Brian Rhodes of Hartford. Other members of the committee are Tim Aaby of Rice Lake, and Dave Pahl of Kaukauna.

Following the MEUW Honors Awards Luncheon that is part of the Annual Conference in La Crosse, MEUW will issue news releases and post details about the honorees on social media and the association's website. Members are encouraged to share those posts with their networks to help share the news and draw attention to the people who are making a difference and supporting public power in Wisconsin. ●





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Statewide working group seeks to address utility-locate issues

Ask any municipal utility leader about an issue that frustrates them and you're sure to get an earful about utility locates. The process is an ongoing challenge caused by inaccuracies, delays, and the complexity of underground infrastructure. Contractors and homeowners alike can face challenges with locating utilities accurately, leading to potential damage, project delays, and increased costs. One group — the Wisconsin Damage Prevention Council (WI DPC) — is actively working to address the issue. Formed in 2023, WI DPC is bringing stakeholders together to help improve processes and address common issues that contribute to utility locating problems. WI DPC came into being after Diggers Hotline was asked by excavators and planners to fix the increasing number of locating issues, even though Diggers Hotline doesn't actually do locates or manage locate companies and has no authority to enforce state statute.

According to Mike Meyer of Diggers Hotline, WI DPC began by discussing and identifying a long list of contributing factors and potential solutions that could impact safety and damage prevention. Three specific areas were prioritized with corresponding subcommittees formed to focus on:

- Improved data sharing related to large-scale projects such as planned annual road-construction and fiber-expansion projects and development of an online repository to share future project plans to provide locators time to fine-tune their staffing needs;
- Enhancements to training and resources, including the potential for mandatory training for excavations, especially out-of-state contractors; and
- Potential legislative action to strengthen accountability and enforcement.

Despite the difficulty of legislative change, the subcommittee is actively working to brainstorm solutions that can benefit damage prevention in the long run. Current statutes focus on enforcement only for gas and hazardous materials, and there has been discussion about expanding that to include all facility types and improving and streamlining the enforcement process.



Members' *NEWS*

Two employees have recently joined Kaukauna Utilities: **Lisa Holmes** is a Billing Specialist and **Dennis Grimm, Jr.** is a Junior Mechanical Technician.

Terri Greenfield has joined Waupun Utilities as an Accounting Coordinator.

Send us your news! Tell MEUW about new hires, promotions, retirements, honors, and awards: news@meuw.org

In Memoriam



Gerald "Jerry" Ewert, longtime General Manager of Black River Falls Municipal Utilities, passed away on March 30, at age 72. Jerry was President of MEUW's Board of Directors in 2013-14. The full obituary is [here](#).

The WI DPC has also discussed alternatives to the three-working-day start date. For example, tickets filed at 9:00 a.m. on a Monday enable work to start on Thursday at 9:00 a.m. (three working days from the day and time the ticket was initiated). One solution is to move to a system where no matter what time the ticket is called in — for example, whether it's 9:00 a.m., noon, or 4:00 p.m. on Monday — the start date and time would be on Thursday at anytime after 12:01 a.m. The change has been implemented in other states and is helping locators to better schedule and group work instead of having to be at certain locations by certain times each day. Similarly, other states also have implemented uniform ticket sizes, limiting tickets to a quarter-mile or less in urban areas or a half-mile in rural areas.

The challenges of utility locates has been the subject of presentations at the Electric Operations Conference & Expo in both 2024 and 2025. MEUW is following the work of the WI DPC and will keep members informed. Anyone interested in participating in WI DPC meetings is welcome to do so. For more information, please contact MEUW's Director of Legislative and Regulatory Relations Tyler Vorpagel. ●



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MEUW NEWS Monitor

New Regional Safety Manager joins MEUW



Bill Freidig joined MEUW as Regional Safety Manager on April 30. Most recently, he was Lead Safety Consultant at Alliant Energy, where he

worked for 25 years. He also runs his own health-consultancy company, focusing on life-skill development for youth and adults. He graduated from UW-Platteville, where he played basketball under Coach Bo Ryan. He reports to Mike Czuprynski, Director of Safety Services and Operations, and will provide safety services to Columbus, Cuba City, Evansville, Hartford, Lake Mills, and Sun Prairie. Bill grew up on a farm in southwest Wisconsin and now lives in Verona. He and his wife, Carla, have five adult children and seven grandchildren.

Limited spots still available for upcoming Excavation Competent Person workshop

Learn safe excavation operation to avoid a common hazard faced by utility employees. As with any hazard, a well-

trained employee is the best defense against injuries on the job. MEUW is pleased to offer Excavation Competent Person training that includes both classroom and hands-on field training.

Attendees will review OSHA's 29 CFR 1926 Subpart P Excavation Standard (adopted and enforced by the state under SPS 332) and learn safety aspects, potential hazards, protective systems and planning for safe excavation and trenching. Choose from among three remaining dates and locations. Details and instructor information can be found [here](#). Space is limited.

Virtual training workshop will help "professionalize" your communications skills

We communicate with customers every day, using several different methods. Part of our "The Power of One" customer service training series, this 90-minute virtual training will help participants master the art of clear and professional communication across email, text, and phone interactions. This course covers essential phone skills such as active listening and gathering key information to ensure effective outcomes. It will explore etiquette, policies,

and legal considerations for written communication. Additionally, participants will learn to craft concise, impactful emails, and texts that enhance customer service and reflect professionalism. The training will be held virtually on Thursday, May 22, at 10:00 a.m. Registrants have the choice to enroll as an individual learner or have one person from your municipality register for group viewing. Registration information is [here](#).

Next Fundamentals of Utility Management training series course set for June 4

Continue — or kickstart — your own professional development by attending the Utility Planning and Risk Management course planned for June 4 in Mauston. Recognizing the complexity of electric utilities as well as the careful attention to detail and comprehensive planning that's needed to maximize operational efficiency, this one-day course will explore basic strategic and operational planning and discuss how careful risk assessment can influence long-term success. The training is suitable for municipal workers at all skill levels and backgrounds. Additional information and registration are available [here](#). ●

Investor-owned utilities disclose CEO pay ratios based on 2024 total compensation

U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) regulation requires a public company to disclose the ratio of the total compensation paid to its chief executive officer (CEO) to the median compensation of its employees. The requirement was mandated by the Dodd-Frank Act, a massive financial reform law passed in 2010 to prevent another crisis like the one in 2007–2008. The disclosure went into effect in 2017 and is intended to provide shareholders with information they can use to evaluate the reasonableness of a CEO's compensation. Companies have discretion in the methodology used to identify the profile of the median employee and that employee's compensation, which is only required to be updated once every three years. The four largest investor-owned utilities serving Wisconsin customers included the disclosures in proxy statements issued with their annual reports to shareholders this spring. The details are summarized in the table at right.

Company	Chief Executive Officer(CEO)	CEO's Total Compensation in 2024	Median Employee Compensation ¹	Ratio
Alliant Energy Corporation	Lisa Barton	\$6,971,735	\$136,985	51 to 1
Madison Gas and Electric Co.	Jeff Keebler	\$2,126,131	\$138,555	15.3 to 1
WEC Energy Group ²	Scott Lauber	\$10,948,901	\$134,977	81 to 1
Xcel Energy Corp.	Bob Frenzel	\$12,932,063	\$130,406	99 to 1

¹ Median employee compensation amounts exclude the CEO and are based on fiscal-year data from internal payroll records for all individuals employed at year-end; Alliant and MGE used data as of Dec. 31, 2023, WEC used data as of Dec. 31, 2022, and Xcel used data as of Dec. 31, 2024.

² WEC is the parent company of utilities that do business as We Energies and Wisconsin Public Service Corp.

LIVELines

Official monthly publication of **Municipal Electric Utilities of Wisconsin, Inc.**, the statewide trade association representing the interests of Wisconsin's public power providers since 1928.

This e-newsletter is distributed to more than 1,200 utility professionals and leaders throughout Wisconsin and the Midwest on the first Tuesday of every month.

LIVE LINES has been published continuously for many decades and provides useful information, news on emerging utility issues and legislation, updates on events, training programs and member services, as well as engaging feature stories spotlighting utilities, communities and leaders.

Reader comments and suggestions are welcome — send by email to news@meuw.org

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An archive of past issues
of *Live Lines* is available at
www.issuu.com/meuw

A note of thanks ...

Recently, Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC) needed additional assistance due to an unexpected faculty absence. When this urgent situation arose, MEUW reached out to CVTC and graciously offered to help. MEUW employee **Don Harnisch** stepped up as a CVTC Adjunct Faculty and helped out with very short notice to conduct testing for 4th year journeyman. Without this responsive assistance from MEUW, CVTC would have delayed the completion of the fourth-year students. We are grateful for our relationship and your speedy response to our needs.



On behalf of everyone involved in the 4th Year Journeyman Lineman Testing, we would like to extend our deepest gratitude for your invaluable time, expertise, and dedication. Your participation played a critical role in the success of this year's testing and in the development of the next generation of linemen.

We are incredibly fortunate to have had such a skilled and experienced group of professionals volunteering their time. Special thanks go out to:

- **Tim Wiste** – River Falls Municipal Utilities
- **Mike Kurkowski** – Superior Water and Light
- **Ryan Kenealy** – Dairyland Power Cooperative
- **Mike Otteson** – Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative
- **Mike Vanderwyst** – Marshfield Utilities
- **Aaron Harnisch** – Alliant Energy
- **Sam Turner** – Riverland Energy Cooperative
- **Ryan Pelowski** – Trempealeau Municipal Electric Utility
- **Nate Scheithauer and Kyle Levra** – St. Croix Electric Cooperative
- **Conner Leonard** – Xcel Energy
- **Nate Gustum** – Barron Electric Cooperative
- **Jeff Fellenz** – Clark Electric Cooperative

And an extra special thank you to Don from MEUW for his exceptional role in facilitating and organizing the class. Don's friendly and kind demeanor, combined with his remarkable organizational skills, made this training a seamless and valuable experience for everyone involved. His dedication truly stands out and made a significant impact on the success of this event.

Your organization's commitment to safety, excellence, and mentorship is what keeps our trade strong and moving forward. MEUW's willingness to support the testing process not only ensures a high standard in our field but also demonstrates the values that make our industry proud.



Thank you again for your outstanding contribution. We hope to continue working alongside such dedicated professionals in the future.

With sincere appreciation,
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Associate Members supply goods and services to support operations

Municipal utilities — like many other businesses — rely on suppliers who provide goods and services to help keep their operations running smoothly. Recognizing the value these supply-partners provide to association members, MEUW offers an Associate Membership for businesses and other entities — as well as the individuals who represent them. Through this membership, MEUW provides suppliers with access to MEUW members, making available opportunities to connect with utility employees to develop and strengthen business relationships.

So far in 2025, more than 125 companies have paid dues as Associate Members of MEUW. Their direct support helps MEUW maintain reasonable registration fees for events like the Electric Operations Conference & Expo and the Annual Conference (including the golf outing). A listing of Associate Members, including a link to their websites, is available on MEUW.org and can be accessed [here](#).

If you know a supplier who would benefit from building a stronger connection with the municipal-utility community across Wisconsin, let them know about MEUW's [Associate Membership](#). The program is changing for 2026, with the goal of making it even easier for suppliers to maximize their investment. Full details will be rolled out in late summer. ●

Municipal leaders from across northwest Wisconsin gathered in Rice Lake on April 11 to discuss safety practices, operational challenges, and strategic issues affecting their utilities and the industry overall. The discussions included updates on mutual aid, safety auditing, accident-reporting procedures, and the importance of training first responders to deal with downed power lines. The group also talked about service territory issues, political challenges in the region, and generational differences in the workforce.

Nine communities were represented at the meeting, which also included discussion about rising costs, sched-



ule delays, and errors impacting engineering projects. The meeting was organized by MEUW Regional Safety Manager Brian Johnson and was marked by

open dialogue, valuable peer-to-peer learning, and a shared commitment to continuous improvement in safety and service. Those participating included (from left) Josh Ash, Ryan Runden (both of Cumberland), Ryan Schlapper (Spooner), Jaden Ebert (Cameron), Jeremy Boe (Barron), Jimmy Smith, Tim Aaby (both of Rice Lake), MEUW's Brian Johnson, Wes Arndt (New Richmond), and Wayne Siveringling (River Falls). Tim Kuhn (Bloomer) is not pictured.

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Our company has deep roots and an exciting role at the intersection of energy and economic development. We can develop solutions for municipalities for economic development growth so they can respond to RFI and know they will have the power, even if the investor-owned or other utility can't guarantee it and/or it will take a while to get that up and running.

Municipalities continue to face ever increasing challenges in the areas of energy costs, reliability, capacity costs/availability and sustainability. Our solutions help municipalities address these challenges. By collaborating with OnSite Partners, our team can improve your area's energy value proposition, attract high-quality investments, and accelerate business growth.



We are happy to support MEUW and look forward to connecting with current and new business partners. See you in La Crosse!

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Get to know a little about some Wisconsin lawmakers



This regular feature helps readers get to know Wisconsin elected officials and better understand their views on policies that may impact municipal utilities.

Rep. Green sits on Energy and Utilities Committee



Chanz Green (R-Grand View) has represented District 74 in the Wisconsin State Assembly

since his election in 2022. The district is located in northwest Wisconsin and includes all of Iron, Sawyer, and Washburn Counties, most of Ashland County, the southern half of Bayfield County, the southern half of Douglas County, and part of northeast Burnett County.

Notably, Green is a member of the Assembly Committee on Energy and Utilities. He serves as Chair of the Committee on Tourism and Vice Chair of the Committee on State Affairs. He is also a member of the Commerce; Rural Development; Sporting Heritage; Criminal Justice and Public Safety; and Forestry, Parks and Outdoor Recreation committees.

He has worked on a wide range of legislative proposals, from hunting regulations and tax reforms — such as income-tax deductions on overtime wages — to promoting mental health

training in schools and supporting grants for technical education equipment.

Born in Amery in Polk County, Green graduated from Amery High School in 2009. While in high school, he began working for the city's Department of Public Works, eventually rising to the position of Assistant Director. He later built a career in municipal utilities, ultimately becoming the Utilities Manager for Ashland, which operates its own water and sewer utility but does not have a municipal electric utility.

His experience in municipal water and sewer utilities played a significant role in shaping his understanding of utility operations. He has publicly emphasized the importance of modernizing and maintaining utility infrastructure to ensure reliable service for Wisconsin residents.

Green is also a small business owner, operating Ashland Event Rentals and the Pioneer Bar in Cable.

He enjoys spending time outside and is an avid hunter and fisherman. He currently lives in Grand View with his girlfriend, Katie.

Rep. Hysell is new to representing the 48th



Andrew Hysell (D-Sun Prairie) became the Representative for Wisconsin's 48th

District in January. The 48th district is in northeast Dane County and southwest Dodge

County and includes Sun Prairie and parts of the east side of Madison.

Hysell is a member of the Committee on Constitution and Ethics, Committee on Judiciary, and the Committee on Rules. On his website, he says his priorities are healthcare affordability, education reform, and economic opportunity.

Hysell was born in Ridgewood, N.J., and moved several times during childhood, eventually landing in Wisconsin. He graduated from Milwaukee's Pius XI High School and earned his bachelor's degree from Carroll University in 1993.

After college, he worked for Senate and Assembly Democrats — starting off as an intern and then serving as a legislative aide. In 1996, he began working on campaigns, including leading fundraising efforts for Maine Democrat Tom Allen's congressional run. He also held roles in several advocacy organizations, including the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids and Save the Children. Additionally, he directed the Campaign for Healthy Kids and partnered with the Let's Move! Campaign championed by then-First Lady Michelle Obama.

In 2013, Hysell co-founded a management consulting firm, Hysell & Wagner LLC, which was involved in administering the Kansas Reading Roadmap program.

Hysell returned to Wisconsin in 2013 and worked for CTA Strategies, LLC, a public policy consulting firm. Two years later, he also joined the Madi-

son law firm Lawton & Cates.

He made an unsuccessful bid for the 46th district seat in 2022 before winning election in 2024.

Hysell currently resides in Sun Prairie.

Sen. Ratcliff represents the 16th, serves on Utilities Committee



Melissa Ratcliff (D-Cottage Grove) is the State Senator for Wisconsin's 16th Senate District, a

position she has held since January 2025. Prior to this, she represented the 46th Assembly District in the Wisconsin State Assembly from 2023 to 2025.

Wisconsin's 16th Senate District is located in south-central Wisconsin. It includes much of eastern Dane County, western Jefferson County, and part of southwest Dodge County. Some of the cities and villages within this district are Stoughton, Sun Prairie, and Cottage Grove.

Ratcliff serves on the Committee on Utilities and Tourism. She also sits on the committees on Administrative Rules and Information Policy and Technology. Additionally, she is a member of the Joint Legislative Audit, Joint Review of Administrative Rules, and the Joint Survey Committee on Retirement Systems.

Ratcliff was born and raised in Wausau. She graduated from Wausau East High School and earned her paralegal certification from Madison Area Technical College. She worked as a paralegal for 24 years at Eisenberg Law Offices in Madison.

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Wisconsin UTILITY NEWS Digest

Three investor-owned utilities file rate increase requests

Alliant Energy, Madison Gas and Electric (MGE), and Xcel Energy have each filed applications with the Public Service Commission (PSC) of Wisconsin asking to raise electric rates in 2026 and 2027. The PSC approved notices of proceeding in each of the dockets on April 24.

According to an online report from Wisconsin Public Radio (WPR), the three utilities say they need to increase rates to upgrade aging infrastructure and to pay to build additional resources for generating energy. The investor-owned utilities also asked the PSC to approve a slight increase in each of the company's profit rate, or "return on equity" (ROE).

The PSC is expected to vote on the proposals later this year. When regulators last considered rate hikes for the three utilities — in 2023 — the three-person Commission approved lower rate hikes than the utilities requested and took steps to limit utility profits.

Alliant, which serves portions of central, eastern and south-central Wisconsin, [applied](#) to increase overall electric rates by 8.27% in 2026, and 5.61% effective in 2027, or by roughly \$201.9 million over the two years. The utility also seeks to increase its profit rate from 9.8% to 9.9%.

MGE, the state's smallest IOU, which serves the Madison area, [applied](#) to increase overall electric rates by 4.89% in 2026 and

4.53% in 2027. If approved, MGE's annual electric revenues would increase by a total of \$47.7 million in two years. The utility asked to increase its profit rate from 9.7% to 10%.

Xcel serves customers in western Wisconsin, and [applied](#) to increase overall electric rates by 11.78% in 2026 and 7.15% in 2027, or by \$150.7 million over the two years. The company also asked to increase its profit rate from 9.8% to 10%.

In Alliant's 2023 rate filing, the Commission approved an estimated 8.4% electric rate increase in 2024 and 2025 instead of the utility's requested 13.8% hike for those two years. The PSC also approved cutting Alliant's profit rate from 10% to 9.8%. Regulators also denied Alliant's request to change reimbursement for solar customers putting energy back into the grid.

For MGE, the PSC in 2023 approved an estimated 5.8% electric rate increase for 2024 and 2025. Initially, the utility requested a nearly 7.2% increase over two years. The PSC also voted to reduce the utility's profit rate from 9.8% to 9.7%.

In Xcel's 2023 case, the PSC approved a 0.1% rate increase for 2024 instead of the 4.8% hike the utility requested. Xcel also had requested a boost to its profit rate from 10% to 10.25%. The PSC instead cut the ROE to 9.8%.

In response to the filings, the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) of Wisconsin ex-

pressed hope the PSC can bring down the size of the increases because "at some point people need a break" from rising prices. CUB also will advocate to reduce the size of the profit rates.

"Customers have been overpaying in the area of profits for far too long," CUB's Executive Director told WPR. "It's time to really make sure there's balance because it's hard on customers paying their bills."

New Milwaukee alderman is proponent of municipalization

According to a recent *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* story, a candidate who won election on April 1 to fill a vacant aldermanic seat is proposing to replace We Energies and have the City of Milwaukee take over electric service. To be successful, Alex Brower's proposal would require support from enough members of the city's Common Council and Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier Johnson — hurdles that seem unlikely to be overcome.

Brower acknowledged he doesn't have the public support that would be needed to move forward, telling the newspaper that after meeting with the Mayor's Office, they were "not keen." The idea to municipalize in Milwaukee surfaces every now and then as leaders in Wisconsin's largest city look for solutions to rising costs and customer frustrations with the investor-owned utility serving nearly all of southeast Wisconsin.

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Political Profiles *Continued from page 8*

Her political career began in 2018 when she was elected to the Cottage Grove Village Board. Later that year, she was appointed to the Dane County Board of Supervisors, where she served until 2024.

On her website, she said she is proud to have worked on policies to increase funding for roads and public safety, support domestic vio-

lence survivors, and push back against efforts to eliminate diversity, equity, and inclusion programs.

Outside her elected office, Ratcliff was named Ally of the Year by the Sun Prairie Colonial Club in 2024 and is an active member of the Miracle League of Dane County.

In her free time, Ratcliff enjoys gardening and reading. She currently resides with her two children in Cottage Grove. ●



Mutual Aid Hotline

When you need help, call MEUW – 24 hours a day, seven days a week – for help coordinating mutual aid assistance

1-844-MEUW-911
(1-844-638-9911)



Focus on Energy helps Wisconsin schools save energy, educate

Focus on Energy has been a transformative force for schools and students in Wisconsin, including many schools served by municipal electric utilities. By streamlining the process of energy improvements and offering substantial incentives, Focus on Energy enables schools to save money and reduce their energy consumption, benefiting both the educational environment and the community at large.

Since 2023, Focus on Energy has paid out over half a million dollars in incentives to approximately 70 K-12 schools in municipal electric utility territories. These incentives, often combined with additional utility resources, have been pivotal in helping schools undertake energy-saving projects that might otherwise be financially out of reach. The impact is evident in the significant reductions in energy costs and the enhanced learning environments resulting from these improvements.

One recent example is the [School District of Arcadia](#), which is now saving an estimated \$40,000 a year in energy costs, made possible by over \$83,000 they received from Focus on Energy in partnership with Arcadia Electric Utility for their energy-efficient upgrades. The district undertook a comprehensive HVAC upgrade, replacing old inefficient boilers with two new 90% efficient hot water condensing boilers. The district also installed variable frequency drives (VFDs) and a demand-controlled ventilation system, to optimize airflow and maintain comfort for the students and staff in the building.

Focus on Energy offers schools both financial incentives and expert guidance. Energy Advisors, which specialize in educa-

tional facilities, helps schools understand their energy usage and finds ways to save. It works with school administrators and facility management to tailor projects to each district's needs, maximizing the benefits of energy improvements and incentives. Focus on Energy offers incentives to cover a wide range of projects, from lighting upgrades to HVAC system improvements. Energy Advisors guides school districts in the type of incentives available to address their most pressing energy needs and make meaningful changes with lasting impact.

Focus also emphasizes the importance of education and community involvement. Through partnerships with organizations like the Wisconsin K-12 Energy Education Program (KEEP), Focus on Energy engages students in energy conservation efforts. Focus sponsors schools for the [Renew Our Schools](#) challenge that engages students to monitor their school's energy usage and implement strategies to reduce consumption. Schools in Cedarburg, Evansville, Mount Horeb, Muscoda, Oconomowoc, and Sun Prairie have all participated in Renew Our Schools. This experience not only teaches students about the importance of energy efficiency but also empowers them to become advocates for sustainable practices in their communities.

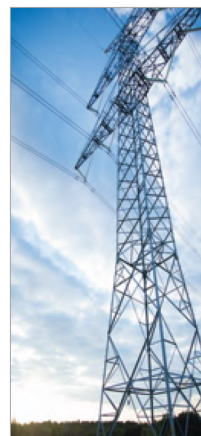
By reducing energy costs, schools can lower operating costs benefiting taxpayers or allocate more funds to educational resources and extracurricular activities, directly benefiting students. Focus on Energy aims to engage with more schools across Wisconsin to bring these benefits to more communities. For more information on how schools can better understand their energy use and identify opportunities to take control of operating costs through measurable energy-saving projects, visit focusonenergy.com. ●

MEUW provides Focus on Energy the opportunity to regularly contribute content to LIVE LINES because of the organizations' shared support of municipal utilities. Reader feedback or questions are always welcome.

Public Power Statistical Report available



The American Public Power Association (APPA) compiles a variety of data that helps to confirm the unique and valuable aspects of the more than 2,000 municipal electric utility systems across the United States. The Public Power Statistical Report is designed to help tell the “public power story” and focuses on the key graphs, tables, and data visualizations that APPA members regularly draw from to make use of all the valuable data at their fingertips — and how to appropriately benchmark their own operational data against general data sets. APPA publishes this report so that each public power utility can play a role in understanding and communicating the key aspects of how public power is distinguished from — or similar to — the rest of the electric utility industry. Click on the image above to download the 2025 version.



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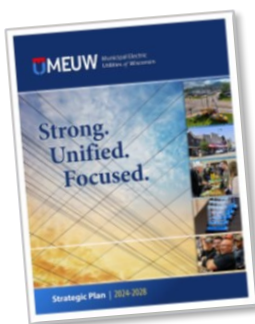
Communities across Wisconsin that own and operate their municipal electric utility have so much to offer. Show your support and take part in the fun this summer. Here's a list of community events in our member communities for June, July, and August:

June 1-8	Rice Lake	Rice Lake Aquafest	July 11-13	Trempealeau	Catfish Days
June 6-7	Kaukauna	Farmapalooza IV	July 12	Plymouth	Mill Street Festival
June 6-7	Shawano	Shawano Sundrop Dayz	July 12	Shawano	Shawano Fest
June 6-8	Elkhorn	Bacon Fest	July 16-20	Trempealeau	Trempealeau County Fair
June 12-15	Mount Horeb	Mount Horeb Summer Frolic	July 17-19	Cadott	Rock Fest
June 13-14	Eagle River	Up North Beerfest & Premier Beer Night	July 18-20	Gresham	Festival of the Arts
June 13-14	New Glarus	New Glarus Polkafest	July 19	Argyle	Christmas in July
June 13	Prairie du Sac	Night Market	July 19-20	Manitowoc	Wisconsin Sand Sculpting Festival
June 14-15	Cuba City	Cuba City Truck & Tractor Pull	July 19-20	Mount Horeb	Mount Horeb Art Fair
June 14	New Glarus	Beer, Bacon and Cheese Festival	July 19	New Glarus	Blues, Brews, & Food Truck Festival
June 14	Richland Center	Dairy Days and Rodeo Parade	July 24-26	Marshfield	Hub City Days
June 14	Sturgeon Bay	Steel Bridge Day Celebration	July 24-27	Waunakee	Waunafest
June 18-22	Reedsburg	Reedsburg Butter Fest	July 25-26	Manitowoc	Mid-Mod Manitowoc
June 18-22	Elroy	Elroy Fair	July 25-27	Two Rivers	Snowfest
June 19-22	Wis. Rapids	Cranberry Blossom Fest	July 26	Black River Falls	Karner Blue Butterfly Festival
June 20-21	Manitowoc	Metrojam	July 29-Aug. 3	Black River Falls	Jackson County Fair
June 21	Sauk City	Summer Solstice Festival	July 30-Aug. 3	Cedarburg	Ozaukee County Fair
June 21	Stoughton	Taste of Stoughton	Aug. 1-2	Spooner	Jack Pine Savage Days
June 26-28	Cadott	Hoofbeat Country Fest	Aug. 5-7	Cadott	Wisconsin Farm Technology Days
June 26-29	Lake Mills	Town and Country Days	Aug. 5	Oconomowoc	Kids' Fest
June 27-28	Plymouth	Cheese Capital Festival	Aug. 7-9	Arcadia	Ashley for the Arts
June 27-29	Waupun	Celebrate Waupun	Aug. 7-10	Bloomer	Community Fair and Parade
June 28	Brodhead	Family Fest	Aug. 7-10	Eagle River	Vilas County Fair
June 28-29	Cedarburg	Cedarburg Strawberry Festival	Aug. 7-10	Kiel	Kiel Community Picnic
July 2	Medford	Medford Celebrates	Aug. 8-10	Algoma	Algoma Shanty Days
July 2-6	Stoughton	Stoughton Fair	Aug. 8-9	Black Earth	Black Earth Field Days
July 3-4	Cumberland	Fourth of July Spectacular	Aug. 8-10	Brodhead	Covered Bridge Days
July 3-4	Menasha	Community Fest	Aug. 8-10	Medford	Back in Time Tractor Show
July 3-4	Shullsburg	Shullsburg 4th of July Celebration	Aug. 9-10	Bangor	Fun Daze
July 4	Eagle River	Fourth of July Celebration	Aug. 9	New London	Rock'n Corn Festival
July 4, 4-6	Manitowoc	Fourth on the Shore, Subfest	Aug. 13-17	Sturgeon Bay	Door County Fair
July 4-5	Pardeeville	Fourth of July Celebration	Aug. 13-17	Sun Prairie	Sweet Corn Festival
July 4	Princeton	Independence Day Celebration	Aug. 13-14	Waupun	Waupun Truck N Show
July 4-5	Sauk City	Fire on the River	Aug. 14-16	La Farge	LarryFest
July 4	Sturgeon Bay	Fourth of July Celebration	Aug. 14-17	Whitehall	Beef and Dairy Days
July 4	Wisconsin Dells	4th of July Extravaganza	Aug. 16	Algoma	Soar on the Shore
July 5	Waterloo	Fourth of July Celebration	Aug. 16	Mazomanie	Gandy Dancer Bluegrass Festival
July 6	Sheboygan Falls	Ducktona 500 Family Festival	Aug. 16-17	Oconomowoc	Festival of the Arts
July 9-13	Elkhorn	Elkhorn RibFest	Aug. 16	Slinger	Slinger Slamfest
July 9	Hartford	Maxwell Street Day	Aug. 16	Stoughton	Coffee Break Festival
July 9-13	Jefferson	Jefferson County Fair	Aug. 19-24	Marshfield	Central Wisconsin State Fair
July 10-13	Lodi	Lodi Agricultural Fair	Aug. 20-24	Manitowoc	Manitowoc County Fair
July 10-13	New Richmond	2025 Fun Fest	Aug. 21-25	Cumberland	Rutabaga Festival
July 10-13	River Falls	River Falls Days	Aug. 22-24	Florence	Florence County Fair
July 10-12	Spooner	Spooner Rodeo: A Wild Ride for All Ages	Aug. 23	Merrillan	Merrillan Christmas Tree Festival
July 11-12	New Lisbon	Wa Du Shuda Days	Aug. 27-31	Shawano	Shawano County Fair
			Aug. 29-30	Prairie du Sac	Wisconsin State Cow Chip Throw & Festival
			Aug. 30-31	Benton	Benton Labor Day Celebration
			Aug. 30-31	Menasha	Fox Jazz Fest

MEUW Board meets to continue focus on executing Strategic Plan

Trade associations like MEUW are not unlike any living, breathing organism — growing, adapting, and evolving. Similarly, they face challenges, weather storms, celebrate wins, and — with the right care and support — thrive.

When the MEUW Board of Directors met in person on April 8, the focus was on executing the association's 2024–2028



Strategic Plan. The same group had gathered late last summer to refresh MEUW's mission, vision, and strategic priorities. Among those priorities is an effort to maximize the value of membership in MEUW and engage all members to elevate public power.

With a number of action items included in the refreshed plan, two ad hoc committees provided reports on the

work they've been doing to help execute the strategy. One committee is focused on developing a three-year member engagement campaign to foster higher levels of participation and a second is developing targeted advocacy training and outreach.

The plan's timeframe coincides with the 100th anniversary of MEUW's founding. Thanks to a committed and engaged Board of Directors, MEUW is moving purposefully into the future — strong, unified, and focused. Members can expect to receive regular updates on the strategy work. Comments and suggestions are always welcomed.

The updated strategy document is available for download [here](#). ●

Wisconsin Utility News Digest *Continued from page 9*

We Energies proposes special rate for data centers

According to a *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel* report, Wisconsin's largest investor-owned utility has proposed a new electric rate designed specifically for very large customers, primarily energy-intensive data centers, like a Microsoft facility proposed for Mount Pleasant.

In a March 31 filing with state regulators, We Energies requested a new electric rate that would have nine billing determinants. One of them is an administrative charge that includes a fixed cost of \$213,118 per billing period plus the variable cost of \$305 per megawatt of Maximum Customer Demand per billing period. The utility said the monthly charge is designed to cover the full personnel and overhead costs dedicated to serving any new VLC (very large customer).

Consumer groups called for a "robust analysis and a transparent process" to evaluate the proposal.

LIVELines Classifieds

MEUW is pleased to promote job openings with its member utilities across Wisconsin. New positions are regularly added to our website — check them out [here](#) or use your smartphone to scan the QR code below. Here are some current opportunities available:

Oconto Falls Municipal Utilities — [Utility Manager](#)

Kaukauna Utilities

[Mechanical Technician](#)

[Finance and Administration Director](#)

City of Fennimore

[Director of Public Works](#)

[Journeyman Electric Lineworker](#)

When your utility is hiring, be sure to email the job posting to office@meuw.org.



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