

Electric Operations Conference & Expo promises insights, networking

Excitement is building for the 2025 Electric Operations Conference & Expo in the Wisconsin Dells!

When employees and leaders from Wisconsin municipal and cooperative electric utilities get together in January, they will be continuing a tradition that strengthens relationships and fosters information sharing to improve utility operations across the state.

MEUW and the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association (WECA) will hold the 2025 Electric Operations Conference &

Expo at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells on Jan. 15, 16, and 17.

The event will kick off at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 15, with general session presentations for both MEUW and WECA attendees. A Welcome Reception will begin at 4:30 p.m.

The program for Thursday, Jan. 16 includes general sessions, breakout presentations, and a lively keynote

presentation from Wisconsin legend, Green Bay Packers Hall of Famer Gilbert Brown.

New this year, there will be several “cohort” discussion sessions to enable attendees to participate in smaller group discussions on topics they find the most helpful and interesting. The program will be followed by the annual

banquet honoring graduating apprentices in line-work and electric metering. After breakfast on Friday, Jan. 17, MEUW will hold a Board of Directors’ meeting, beginning at 8:00 a.m.

Thursday’s program will once again hold the vendor Expo for five hours, allowing exhibitors and attendees plenty of time to interact. The trade show will open at 9:30 a.m. and continue through 2:30 p.m. Attendees can choose to visit the Exhibit Hall or attend one or more of the breakout and cohort sessions.

Electric Operations Conference & Expo

Jan. 15–17, 2025

www.meuw.org/eoce



Conference attendees will interact directly with more than 100 utility vendors and suppliers showcasing a range of equipment, tools, and services at Thursday’s Expo.

Another addition this year is the “Supplier Showcase Stage.” This elevated stage area inside the Exhibit Hall provides an opportunity for featured exhibitors to conduct a brief demonstration of their products or services for Expo attendees. There will be several demonstrations throughout the day.

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MEUW launching new customer service training in '25

Customer interactions happen in every role, whether it’s a formal part of your job, or a chance encounter in the grocery store. From Customer Service Representatives to engineers, office managers to lineworkers, effective customer service skills are essential.

Based on member feedback, MEUW is offering a new online series to strengthen those skills among municipal utility employees. Divided into six 90-minute modules, “The Power of One: Developing and Delivering

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As in years past, the event has three registration options for those who wish to attend all or only part of the three-day event.

The program is filled with topical presentations and educational sessions on a variety of subjects. Here's a sampling of who and what is on this year's agenda:

- Public Service Commissioner Marcus Hawkins, who will share his perspective on the current regulatory environment and Commission focus areas.
- Dave Krause, P. E., Design Manager at Electric Power Systems, will present on microgrids and grid resiliency, followed by a panel discussion around the importance role political advocacy plays for municipal utilities.
- Stuart Campbell, Director of Commercial Marketing and Strategic Relations for Irby Utilities, will present on hot topics and industry information of interest for electric utilities.
- Special Agent Amanda Knutson of the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) will discuss cybersecurity measures surrounding grid and infrastructure security.
- Mike Meyers from Diggers Hotline will provide an update on the recently formed Damage Prevention



Council of Wisconsin working to address the challenges of utility locates.

- Benjamin Bella, Safety and Compliance Coordinator for Eau Claire Energy Cooperative, will outline utilities' responsibilities concerning the safety of contractors.

Thursday's agenda will also feature three breakout sessions. In response to attendee feedback, each session will be presented twice to make it easier for participants not to miss a topic they want to learn about. Tom Dagenais, Director of System Planning at ATC, will provide updates on the company's recent activities and future plans. Another session will focus on using global navigational satellite technology to accurately locate utilities by representatives of Fabick Technology Services. The final session will feature Andy Heidtke and Mike Seifert from DOT to review standards and flagging and local nuances that impact the safety requirements.

Expo bingo will also be back in 2025, giving those who visit exhibitors the chance to win a wide variety of exhibitor-donated door prizes while also learning about their goods and services.

After lunch, the cohort discussion sessions will be held on multiple topics of shared interest, including mutual aid and facility construction

projects. These discussions will be member-led.

Thursday's program concludes with a keynote

"fireside chat" with Gilbert Brown.

Fans will remember that he

played 125 games for the Green Bay Packers (from 1993–99 and 2001–03), including more than a dozen playoff games and a victory in Super Bowl XXXI in 1997.

Known for his positive personality, individual style, and bringing the best out of everyone around him, Gilbert is a true Wisconsin Legend. He founded the Gilbert



Brown

Brown Foundation and has donated funds to 140+ Wisconsin charities for youth. He also hosts several radio shows and podcasts. He will share his insights around teamwork, getting the best out of others, and the importance of community.

The Apprentice Graduation Banquet will take place Thursday evening and features a brief program to recognize the Class of 2024, who completed the lineworker and meter technician programs at Chippewa Valley Technical College and Northeast Wisconsin Technical College. There is a separate registration and \$55 fee required to attend.

Full details are online at www.meuw.org/eoce. ●

Customer service training (continued from page 1)

Outstanding Customer Service" will feature live, interactive, virtual sessions focused on different aspects of and skills needed to deliver exceptional service to both internal and external customers. Topics will include:

- Recognizing different styles to understand what customers are communicating;
- Managing emotions during customer interactions;
- Understanding the impact of one person during moments of truth;
- Strategies of effective customer service, including phone, email, and text communications;
- Assisting customers during challenging interactions; and
- Conflict-resolution strategies

Sign up for a few classes, or attend all the classes in the series and receive a certificate of completion for your effort. No travel is required and the 90-minute timeframe also makes it easier to get away to participate.

The virtual training takes place on Thursdays from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. The 2025 training dates are: Jan. 23, Feb. 20, March 20, April 24, May 22, and June 19.

Mark your calendars for these upcoming modules — details and registration will be available soon. ●

Seeking to connect directly with suppliers, MEUW moves on from WUSA relationship

The administrative relationship between MEUW and the Wisconsin Utility Suppliers Association (WUSA) is coming to an end as of Dec. 31, 2024. WUSA was originally formed more than a decade ago to promote a closer relationship between businesses that provide products and services to electric utilities by jointly staging trade shows, seminars, and social activities. The organization functions with a volunteer Board of Directors and for many years contracted with MEUW to collect membership dues and manage logistics for the annual Electric Operations Expo (formerly Joint Superintendents' Conference) and other events.

Recognizing the value of a direct connection with suppliers and utility partners, MEUW is expanding its Associate Membership program to provide more engagement opportunities between MEUW's member utilities and the companies that provide goods and services to the industry. The change is consistent with MEUW's long-term strategic plan to strengthen relationships with key stakeholders and is expected to bring about operational efficiencies and new non-dues-revenue opportunities.

There is no action required by current WUSA members. Those who have questions should contact **Jordan Rykal** of EMS Partners, Inc., current WUSA Board President, at (612) 986-6117 or jordan.rykal@emspartnersinc.com. ●

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Members' NEWS

Emily Brown has joined Waupun Utilities as a Customer Service Representative.

Tim Reel recently began working for Oconomowoc Utilities as Waste Water Treatment Plant Manager/ Safety Director.

Waunakee Utilities recently announced two new hires: **Dick Neff** has joined as a Substation/Metering Technician and **Jamie Frederick** is the new Electric Superintendent. A Waunakee native, Jamie graduated from UW-Platteville and worked as an Engineering Supervisor for Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative after 10 years as a Distribution Planning Engineer with Madison Gas & Electric Co.

Send us your news! Tell MEUW about new hires, promotions, retirements, honors, and awards, so those tidbits can be shared in MEUW member communications. Simply send an email to news@meuw.org to share your news.



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Steve Zach set to retire at year-end

Long-time Boardman and Clark attorney Steve Zach — a familiar name and face to many MEUW members — is retiring. A pillar of employment law for public power leaders, Steve's career has spanned decades, helping municipal utilities navigate complex employment law matters with both counsel and education.

Steve's journey in employment law began more than 20 years ago when he started



Attorney Steve Zach, shown here speaking at the 2020 Electric Operations Conference, was a frequent presenter at MEUW conferences and seminars and led a Management Training Program session for many years.

working with labor negotiations for utilities. As bargaining units gave way to broader employment concerns, Steve's reputation as an expert grew. He became a trusted advisor to utilities across the state, often speaking at MEUW conferences and offering insights on critical issues.

"Over 43 years, you can't help but accumulate stories," Steve shared, reflecting on the wealth of experiences he's encountered. "But one of the most memorable aspects has been the camaraderie at the MEUW conferences. It wasn't just about representing individual utilities — it was the connection, the collective energy, and the bond we shared."

Steve emphasized that the relationships he's built over the years with leaders, both at MEUW and within individual utilities, are among the most meaningful and enriching parts of his career.

As Steve prepares for retirement, he leaves the following advice for MEUW members: "I hope people don't take the organization for granted. The role it plays in public power across the state is crucial. It's important for members to appreciate the collective strength that the organization provides, and to continue to share the value of public power."

Looking ahead, Steve is excited to spend more time with his family — his three children and five grandchildren, who all live within 20 minutes of him. Travel with his wife, Patty, is also on the horizon. •

Editor's note: *We wish Steve all the best in this new phase of life and thank him for his dedication to public power and the people he's worked with over the decades.*

Committees contribute to value and success of MEUW

Organizations are made up of people who give their time and talent to support the greater good. MEUW benefits from the volunteer leadership of many members who serve on standing committees of the Board of Directors. The committees meet regularly to provide support and direction to association programs and services. A full list of committees is [here](#).

Three individuals recently joined the MEUW Safety & Education Committee to fill vacancies on the 11-person committee. The newest members



are (top to bottom): **Aaron Hau**, Electric Meter Technician for Plymouth Utilities;



Ryan Pelowski, Lead Lineworker for Trempealeau Municipal Utilities, and



Owen Vande Kolk, Assistant Electric Superintendent for Waupun Utilities. Together, they bring 57 years of collective utility experience to the work of the S&E Committee.

In addition, **Brian Dellemann** (Two Rivers) and **Dave Pahl** (Kaukauna) recently took on new roles, serving the Committee as Vice Chair and Secretary, respectively.



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Apparatus Training Trailer: Hands-on education on wheels



For lineworkers across the state, training is a critical part of ensuring both safety and efficiency on the job. MEUW members know the value of high-quality, hands-on learning experiences. With this in mind, MEUW has rolled out an exciting new tool designed to enhance training opportunities for utilities and their workers.

What is the Apparatus Training Trailer?

The Apparatus Training Trailer is a mobile, state-of-the-art “facility” designed to bring essential hands-on training directly to utility workers. It began as a simple 16-foot trailer with an overhead distribution system to help workers practice rubber-gloving and understand minimum approach distances. Over time, it has evolved to include a wealth of additional features designed to give workers an even deeper understanding of the equipment they work with daily. The trailer is a passion project for Electric Utility Safety and Training Coordinator Randy Larson, who joined MEUW in August 2018 and brought decades of experience as a lineworker apprentice instructor to the role. Larson



Larson

has a genuine hunger for safety and has always looked for innovative techniques to convey life-saving training material in a new way.

The trailer has grown in size and complexity, now featuring a 20-foot space equipped with both overhead and underground systems. This evolution allows for a broader range of training topics, including three-phase systems, fault isolation, and proper work procedures with insulated tools.

Key Features and Training Focus

One of the most exciting additions to the training trailer is its focus on equipment that workers don’t typically get to work with but that can be dangerous if mis-handled. For example:

Voltage Regulators: The devices that control voltage on a distribution line are often dangerous if not handled properly. The trailer will include scenarios where workers practice safe switching procedures and experience

firsthand the consequences of mistakes. Participants will also get experience with different control panels and become familiar with their work procedures.

Capacitors: Fixed and switched capacitors are another area of focus. These components can be hazardous, especially when workers aren’t accustomed to working with them. The trailer will provide

hands-on experience with capacitance testing, proper work procedures, and safety protocols.

Load Tap Changers (LTCs):

These devices adjust the voltage on transformers and understanding how they work is critical for maintaining a stable electrical system.



Overhead and Pad-Mounted Transformers: The trailer will also provide training on single-phase transformers, including testing for output voltages and polarity checks, which is vital for paralleling and three-phase banking transformers.

The trailer is built to offer practical, scenario-based learning, emphasizing what workers should do—and just as importantly, what they shouldn’t do — when dealing with equipment like voltage regulators, capacitors, and transformers. By replicating real-world situations in a controlled environment, the trailer ensures that workers are well-prepared for the challenges they face on the job.

Training Logistics and Versatility

One of the obvious standout features of the Apparatus Training Trailer is its mobility. Weighing in at around 5,000 pounds, the trailer can be easily transported to various utility sites, making it a flexible solution for year-round training.

The goal is to keep workers engaged and trained, even in challenging weather conditions, such as during winter months. The trailer’s compact design allows it to be used in garages or other spaces that are out of the elements, ensuring that training doesn’t stop just because the weather turns cold.

Each of the trailer’s training stations is designed to take about 10 minutes, providing workers with a hands-on experience and a chance to rotate through eight or nine different stations. Whether learning to switch voltage regulators or troubleshoot transformers, trainees will leave with a deeper understanding of the equipment they interact with daily.

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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

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The trailer will begin its training schedule on Tuesday, Jan. 21, 2025, at Kaukauna, followed by stops at Menasha, New London, and other utilities around the state. Hosting utilities will help prep the training stations, such as providing transformers and capacitors for testing. These collaborative efforts are crucial in ensuring that the trailer can deliver the most relevant and effective training possible.

A Collaborative Effort Made Possible by Donations

The Apparatus Training Trailer owes much of its success to the generosity of MEUW members. Donations from utilities including New London, Menasha, Waupun, Dairyland Power, and others have allowed for the purchase of critical equipment. These donations were pivotal to keeping costs low, with less than \$100 spent on new equipment, as most of the materials have been donated.

Larson, who led the effort to assemble the trailer and build its functionality, is quick to express his gratitude for MEUW members' support: "I'm thankful to the membership and the Board of Directors for investing in this project," he said. "This equipment needs to be on the move, bringing valuable training to lineworkers everywhere."

The trailer also will be a critical training tool for future lineworkers at Moraine

Park Technical College (MPTC) in Beaver Dam. The equipment previously used for MEUW's underground trailer is being loaned to MPTC's Electrical Power Distribution lab, providing students with hands-on training in a controlled environment.

The Future of Lineworker Training

The goal of the Apparatus Training Trailer is clear: To make training more accessible and practical for every lineworker in the state. With its combination of real-world scenarios, expert instruction, and mobile flexibility, this new training tool has the potential to transform the way municipal utilities approach workforce development.

As it continues its statewide tour, the training trailer is expected to visit utility safety meetings, serve as a pre-switching practice tool for substations, and become a vital part of the ongoing education for every MEUW member. In the coming years, it is hoped that the trailer will become a permanent fixture in training programs across Wisconsin, reaching every municipal utility and helping lineworkers sharpen their skills and knowledge.

With hands-on practice and real-world lessons, the Apparatus Training Trailer is setting a new standard for what lineworker education can and should be. MEUW's commitment to providing the highest-quality training is evident in this innovative new initiative, and it is sure to benefit lineworkers for years to come. ●

Podcasts deliver news and insights to help explain, engage

Change is a constant in today's energy industry, and online podcasts have emerged as a tool to help public power leaders, customers, and other stakeholders stay informed about what they need to know. MEUW members may be particularly interested in two podcast series that are widely available:

- **"Public Power Now"** is produced by the American Public Power Association (APPA) to bring listeners the latest news and insights from key public power utility executives, power industry players, and APPA staff. A recent episode featured an interview with Kaukauna Utilities Commission Chair Lee Meyerhofer, who discussed the importance of governing board members' engagement. Listen to it [here](#).
- **"Electric Wire"** is produced by Customers First Coalition (CFC) as a tool to educate lawmakers, regulators, and the general public about emerging energy issues. MEUW is a founding member of CFC, which recently released the [50th edition of the podcast](#). ●

Voters choose change: Coming soon to D.C. and Madison



Another long election season has come to an end here in Wisconsin. As life returns to normal, I wanted to share some observations from the election and what it

means for public power nationally and here in the state legislature.

Donald Trump won Wisconsin on his way to being only the second person in U.S. history to be elected to a second, non-consecutive term as president (the other being Grover Cleveland in 1892). Sen. Tammy Baldwin won a close reelection over challenger Eric Hovde, but nationally, Republicans were able to flip enough seats in other states to flip control of the U.S. Senate from Democrat to Republican in the upcoming Congress, 53 seats to 47 seats.

There was no change in house races in Wisconsin; all of Wisconsin's house members won their races, and Republican Tony Wied won the 8th Congressional District race in northeast Wisconsin to succeed former Congressman Mike Gallagher, who resigned his seat earlier this year. Because Gov. Tony Evers called a special election to run concurrently with the November election, Rep. Wied was sworn into congress after his election and will get a head start in the House. Nationally, Republicans will continue to control a majority of seats in Congress, but their margins have shrunk, and the House will now have one of the closest margins in history. As of my writing this, Republicans have won 220 seats in the house and Democrats have won 213 with three races that have yet to be called (218 seats is a majority in the House.)

This means that Republicans will have control over all three branches of government. However, because the Republican's majority margin in the House is so narrow, they will essentially need every House Republican to vote with the Republicans to be able to pass legislation. And because Republicans don't have a filibuster-proof majority in the Senate, most things will require support from 60 Senators to pass (one exception applies to budget bills, which require only a majority to pass in the Senate).

Closer to home in the Wisconsin Legislature, the Wisconsin State Supreme Court ordered new districts be drawn for the 2024 election, and those new

district lines were passed by the legislature and signed into law by Gov. Evers earlier this year. Those new district lines in the Assembly tend to favor Republicans, but by a more narrow margin. In the State Senate, Republicans hold an advantage right now because only half the Senate is up for election at a time, but in 2026 there is a chance that Democrats could take back control of the Wisconsin Senate.

Republicans currently hold a 64-35 vote majority in the State Assembly, and they will enter the 2025 legislative session with a 54-45 advantage. There will be 30 incoming freshmen in the 2025 legislative class, meaning there will be a large number of new faces and people to educate about public power. On the Assembly Energy and Utilities Committee, there will be at least four new members of the committee (assuming the number of committee members stays the same). Two Republicans, Rep. Warren Petryk (retired) and Rep. Loren Oldenburg (lost election), will need to be replaced,

as will two Democrats, Rep. Melissa Radcliff and Rep. Dora Drake (both elected to the State Senate).

In the State Senate, Republicans currently have a 22-11 super majority. As the 2025 session begins, their margin will shrink to an 18-15 majority, and if Democrats can pick up two seats in 2026, that majority would flip to Democrat control. Six first-time senators are joining the chamber (two of whom are moving over from the Assembly). We do not expect any changes to the Senate Utility and Technology Committee, as everyone currently serving either won re-election or did not have to run this cycle.

The bottom line: There are going to be a lot of new faces in the state legislature. I hope you make plans to attend MEUW's "Day at the Capitol" on Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2025 (2/5/25). Our goal is to have enough members attend so we can meet with all the freshmen legislators, in addition to our members' own representatives, to share our story and explain the advantages of public power. Look for full details on [MEUW's website](#) and make plans to join us!

Tyler Vorpagel is MEUW's Director of Legislative and Regulatory Relations. He can be reached at tvorpagel@meuw.org



Shifting the Balance of Power 2025-26 Legislative Session

Wisconsin Assembly

54 (was 64)	45 (was 35)
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State Senate

18 (was 22)	15 (was 11)
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Republican

Democrat

Who's new? Get to know our state lawmakers

Throughout 2025, *LIVE LINES* will have a regular feature about newly elected state lawmakers and those appointed to utility-related committees. Watch for the articles and get to know the legislators influencing utility policy.

MEUW NEWS Monitor

Attend Day at the Capitol to inform, educate

Join fellow members in Madison on Wednesday, Feb. 5 to help state legislators become more aware of municipal utilities and the advantages of public power. You'll be representing not only your public power community, but also the nearly 300,000 Wisconsinites who get their electricity from a community-owned utility. Full details are available [here](#). A room block is available for those who need lodging the night before. Details and registration are [here](#).

Learn about the fundamentals of utility regulation, compliance and safety

As a highly regulated business, utilities must comply with dozens of operating rules to retain the "right to serve" electric customers. Part of MEUW's Fundamentals of Utility Management training program, this Regulation, Compliance & Safety class will explore the wide array of regulations, compliance, and safety rules every municipal utility leader must follow. The training is planned for Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2025, in Mauston. The one-day course explores the reasons behind the rules and provides insights to make compliance easier. An outline of the training topics, the instructors, and registration details are [here](#).

Spread the word about MEUW's scholarship

MEUW proudly provides "Powering Futures" Scholarships to support students pursuing careers in electrical power distribution. Applications for this year's awards will be accepted Dec. 16, 2024 – Jan. 24, 2025. To be eligible, students must reside in a Wisconsin public power community and must be pursuing post-secondary education to become a Field Service Technician, Groundworker, Line-worker Apprentice, Electric Meter Technician, Substation Electrician Apprentice or Utility Technician. The full criteria and additional details are online at www.meuw.org/scholarships. Click [here](#) to find a customizable letter template you can send to your local high school principals and counselors to encourage applications.

APPA Legislative Rally set for late February

The annual federal Legislative Rally to share the public power message and influence policy is set to take place Feb. 24–26, 2025, in Washington, D.C. Full details about the Rally are available on the American Public Power Association (APPA) website [here](#). Wisconsin typically has one of the largest delegations attending the Rally each year — if you have not attended before, please consider it.

Federal permitting bill impacts public power

Certain provisions in S. 4753, the Energy Permitting Reform Act of 2024 (EPRA), currently being considered by federal lawmakers are creating concerns for the American Public Power Association (APPA) and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

APPA and NRECA have joined together to raise concerns about two specific provisions that would expand the jurisdiction of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) over public power utilities, electric cooperatives, and federal Power Marketing Administrations (PMAs). Those parties are defined as "non-jurisdictional entities" in the Federal Power Act, and EPRA would require such entities to file a tariff to build a



transmission line designated as in the national interest by FERC, a requirement APPA and NRECA consider unnecessary and burdensome. EPRA would also require mandatory participation by public power in new interregional planning processes, which is in direct conflict with FERC Order No. 1000 that provides for voluntary participation. APPA argues that such a change intrudes on public power's

local decision-making authority and is likely to lead to higher electric rates.

While the EPRA bill will help to streamline certain federal permitting processes, APPA and NRECA have drafted an [amendment](#) to allow non-jurisdictional entities to maintain their existing level of FERC oversight. Public power leaders are encouraged to share [this letter](#) and the proposed amendment text with their federal lawmakers.

APPA developing "blueprint" for using elective pay

APPA will receive funding from the Department of Energy to create "blueprints" to help develop projects that use elective pay energy tax credits.

The goal is a step-by-step review of project development — from assembling a project team to filing for elective pay once the project is in service.

The document is scheduled to be completed in May 2025, and will include input from experts in project development, tax law, accounting, and municipal finance. In addition, APPA has obtained commitments from public power utilities that have already gone through the elective pay process to "stress test" the document to ensure that it provides the breadth and depth of guidance needed.

Friends of Public Power nearly met fundraising goal



Total raised:
\$18,950

Through Friends of Public Power, the political action committee and conduit managed by MEUW, the association directs financial resources to support in-state legislative candidates who have signaled their support for public power and the electric-utility industry. Many of the same politicians have shown a willingness to listen to and learn about the issues that matter to MEUW members. As with other trade associations, political giving and developing good relationships with lawmakers is important to advocacy.

MEUW set a goal to raise \$20,000 for the 2023-24 election cycle. In total, \$18,950 was raised, with those funds then directed to both Republican and Democrat candidates in races for the Wisconsin Assembly and State Senate. ●

MEUW Community Spotlight

The regular *LIVE LINES* feature focusing on the history and unique qualities of municipal electric utilities will return next month.

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2025 calendar is full of opportunities to learn and network with public power colleagues

MEUW will offer training programs, conferences, and events in 2025, including those listed here. Registration will typically open 90 days before each scheduled session. Visit [MEUW.org](https://www.meuw.org) for details. Contact [Sharon Wolf](#) with any questions.

Date *	Event	Location
Jan. 15–17	2025 Electric Operations Conference & Expo	Wisconsin Dells
Feb. 5	MEUW Day at the Capitol	Madison
Feb. 12	Regulation, Compliance & Safety	Mauston
Feb. 18–19	Apparatus Workshop	Eau Claire
March 19	Credit & Collections Seminar	Mauston
March 19	2nd Annual Foreman's Roundtable	Johnson Creek
April 2	Leading Through Coaching	Mauston
Apr 29–May 1	Underground School	Eau Claire
May 14–16	2025 Annual Conference and Golf Outing	La Crosse
June 4	Utility Planning & Risk Management	Mauston
Aug. 6	Leading Through Collaboration	Mauston
August and September	District Dinners	TBA
Sept. 24	Accounting and Customer Service Seminar	Mauston
Oct. 8	Communications & Project Management	Mauston
Dec. 3	Leading With Consistency	Mauston

* Dates are subject to change; check “Calendar of Events” at [MEUW.org](https://www.meuw.org) for full details.



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Associate Members support MEUW, member utilities

Having easy access to a strong supplier network is vital to efficient utility operations. The businesses listed here have paid dues as Associate Members of MEUW in 2024. They provide goods and services to utilities in Wisconsin, and through their MEUW membership, these companies — and the individuals who represent them — support the association and its members. Many of these companies also provide sponsorship support that helps MEUW maintain reasonable registration fees for events like the annual Electric Operations Conference & Expo (*see story beginning on page one*). To learn more about any of these Associate Members, please click the company name and follow the link to their website, or check out MEUW's membership directory online [here](#). ●

3M	ElectroTech, Inc.	Locators and Supplies, Inc.	SCS Engineers
4 Control Inc.	Emerald Transformer	Makovsky Brush Services LLC	Sicuro
A.C. Engineering Company	EMS Partners	MC Sales, Inc.	Siemens Ruggedcom
Action Battery Wholesalers, Inc.	Energy Product Sales	McWane Poles	Speed Systems, Inc.
A-Line E.D.S.	EUDS Consulting	Midwest Electrical Solutions	STAR Energy Services, LLC
Almetek Industries Inc.	Evans, Lipka & Associates	Millennium	Stark Tech
Altec Industries, Inc.	Exacter, Inc.	Milwaukee Tool	Stella-Jones
American Padmount Systems	Forster Engineering	Mi-Tech Services, Inc.	Sterling Security Systems
American Power and Communications Group	Fresco	MJ Electric	(Engineering Unlimited)
Anderwylde LLC	FS3 Inc.	mPower Innovations	Sterling Site Access Solutions LLC
A-1 Power LLC	G.E.T. Utility Sales Company	Northeast Wisconsin Technical College	Struxur
A Star Electric	Global Rental	The Okonite Company	(formerly Utility Sales Associates)
ATC	(a division of Altec)	OpenPoint	Subsurface Solutions
Bashlin Industries	H2 Future Power, Inc.	Osmose Utilities Services, Inc.	Sunbelt Solomon
Bell Lumber and Pole	(formerly Proven Power, Inc)	Pieperline (MP Systems, Inc.)	Teel Plastics
Border States Electric	Haverstock, Koenig & Associates	Power Grid Products, Inc.	Terex Utilities
CCI Systems, Inc.	HDR, Inc.	Power Line Sentry	TE/Raychem
Clearline Innovation, LLC	Hubbell Power Systems	(The Sicame Group)	TESCO Metering
C&M Hydraulic Tool Supply, Inc.	Huskie Tools	Powerside	Test Right LLC
Complete Recycling Services LLC	Instruments and Technology	Power System Engineering, Inc. (PSE)	TJH2b Analytical Services
Convergint	Intermatic	Primus Marketing	TSTM Inc.
Cooperative Response Center, Inc.	Interstate Power Systems	Professional Computer Solutions	T&R Electric Supply Co.
Cornell & Associates, Inc.	Intren, LLC	PUSH, Inc.	Utilitra
Crescent Electric Supply	Irby Utilities	R&D Utility Products	Utility Sales and Service
Divergent Alliance	ISG	Radian Research, Inc.	Utility Supply and Construction
The Durham Company	JJ Kane Auctioneers	Reliable Equipment & Service Co.	Vannguard Utility Services, Inc.
Eagle Eye Power Solutions	Jolma Utilities LLC	RESCO	Vermeer Wisconsin
Eaton	J&R Underground LLC	Resilient Structures	Verona Safety Supply, Inc.
EIR Testing and Maintenance Co.	K Fence, Inc. & PRO Stapler, LLC	Rouzer Group	Weldy Lamont Group, Inc.
Electrical Consultants, Inc.	Karcz Utility Services, LLC	Ruekert & Mielke, Inc.	WESCO Distribution
Electric Power Systems International Inc (EPS)	KorTerra	SATEC Global	Wintroy Supply
Electromark Company	KW Associates	S&C Electric Company	Youngstown Gloves
	Laminated Wood Systems		Zielies Tree Service
	LF George, Inc.		

Munis contributing to success of Community Impact Pilot

Municipal electric utilities are playing a pivotal role in the success of Focus on Energy's (Focus) Community Impact Pilot (Pilot), which provides a unique opportunity for deserving small businesses in select Wisconsin communities, to receive as much as \$30,000 toward energy-efficient upgrades such as LED lighting, HVAC equipment, and insulation.

Of the seven Wisconsin communities that have completed the Pilot since it began in 2023, two are served by public power utilities and a third recently launched in Black River Falls. In 2023 Focus on Energy brought the Pilot to Wisconsin Rapids and Menasha and partnered with Wisconsin Rapids Water Works and Lighting Commission (WW&LC) and Menasha Utilities to identify small businesses in their communities in need of energy saving improvements.



Seven small businesses in Menasha received funding through the Pilot, among them were Old Grog and St. Joseph's Food Program.

The historic Old Grog, a well-loved watering hole and eatery in Menasha, is housed in a building that is over 134 years old. The business was in desperate need of upgrades to its aged HVAC and water heating equipment. The Pilot helped fund a full replacement of a non-working furnace, replacing a weather-torn rooftop unit, a 37-year-old gas boiler, and two hot-water circulation pumps. The improvements not only preserved the charm of the Old Grog but are also projected to save nearly \$1,800 a year in energy costs. This work was featured in a recent Focus [blog](#).

Just down the road from Old Grog is St. Joseph's Food Program, a Menasha-based non-profit serving over 750 families and 1,300 students weekly with essential food services.

The Pilot funded improvements including energy-efficient refrigeration units, which are crucial for preserving perishable food items while minimizing energy consumption. The installation of LED lighting throughout the facility enhanced visibility and reduced energy use while providing a more comfortable environment for staff and volunteers. These upgrades are projected to save the non-profit over \$2,000 annually in energy costs, enabling St. Joseph's Food Program to allocate more resources toward their mission.

"[Focus on Energy] has so many great programs and the one here at St. Joe's was just a great example to help get them to be more sustainable and more energy efficient in the long run," said Menasha Utilities General Manager Melanie Krause.

Check out the [video](#), highlighting this effort.

Eleven small businesses in Wisconsin Rapids received



funding for energy-efficient upgrades through Focus' Pilot. Working closely with the WW&LC, the Pilot enabled local businesses such as Bring's Cycling & Fitness, Rapids Rental & Supply, and The Ridges Golf Course to improve the efficiency of their facilities.

"We focused on enhancing Bring's Cyclery to create a more aesthetically pleasing store for customers while reducing energy costs," said Shawn Reimer, Conservation Manager for WW&LC.

By installing energy-efficient LED lighting and removing unnecessary lighting bays, Bring's achieved savings of approximately 60,000 kWh annually, which is estimated to reduce their electric bills by 40-50% each month. You can learn more about Bring's up-

grades in the featured [video](#).

Another Wisconsin Rapids staple, The Ridges Golf Course, has been owned by the Goska

family for 30 years. The buildings on the stunning property needed upgrades, primarily with lighting that was inefficient and inconsistent. The Pilot allowed the Goskas to make improvements to indoor and outdoor lighting with LEDs, enhancing the aesthetics with modern fixtures and better luminance. The Ridges Golf Course is projected to exceed \$4,000 in energy bill savings annually. See more about this project in a video featured on Focus on Energy's [YouTube](#) channel.

By working together with utilities, Focus on Energy is better able to deliver meaningful results to small businesses that are so critical to the social and economic fabric of their communities. If your utility would like to nominate a community to participate in the Pilot for 2025, please complete the [online nomination form](#). Nominations are due Dec. 13, 2024. ●

New EV charging station registration and excise tax rules take effect Jan. 1

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) recently shared [information](#) about the new electric vehicle charging station registration, excise tax, and sales tax exemption, effective Jan. 1, 2025. MEUW members or their partners may be required to register, file returns, and pay the excise tax.

More information is available in [Publication 305, Electric Vehicle Charging Tax Information](#). Contact the DOR directly at (608) 266-6701 or DORExcise@wisconsin.gov if you have excise tax questions.

Wisconsin UTILITY NEWS Digest

PSC approves rate increases for investor-owned utilities

The three-person Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) on Nov. 7 approved rate increases for customers of We Energies and Wisconsin Public Service in 2025 and 2026. The decision came during a nearly eight-hour-long open meeting. More than 1,000 people had testified at public hearings or provided comments in the two rate proceedings.

The utilities, both owned by Milwaukee-based WEC Energy Group, had applied for the rate changes in April, and cited the need for improved line clearance to ensure reliability and construction costs

for renewable energy and natural gas facilities as drivers of the increases.

We Energies received approval for an overall increase of 8.79% over the next two years, which was roughly \$188 million less than the utility had requested. Residential customers will see a \$7.62 increase in monthly electric bills in 2025 and another \$9.73 increase in 2026. The PSC estimated the cumulative increase is 12.38% over two years.

Wisconsin Public Service Corp. received approval for an overall increase of 7.33% over the next two years, which was roughly \$134 million less than the utility had requested. Residential customers will see a \$7.11 increase in 2025

and another \$5.04 increase in 2026. The PSC estimated the cumulative increase is 11.52%.

Both utilities had asked regulators to increase their rates of return to 10% percent, but the Commission opted to keep both of them unchanged at 9.8%.

In an interview with Wisconsin Public Radio, Tom Content, Executive Director of Citizens Utility Board of Wisconsin, said the PSC's decision was "business-as-usual" at a time when many consumers are struggling with utility bills. "This was a huge, missed opportunity," he said. "Customers have ... energy costs rising above inflation, and now they'll continue to ... for the next two years."

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](#). Here are some current opportunities available:

City of Lake Mills — [Electric Lineman](#)

Village of New Glarus — [Journey Line Worker](#)

City of Evansville
[Journey Line Worker](#)
[Apprentice Line Worker](#)

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



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