



# RELIABLE POWER FOR TODAY – AND TOMORROW

By Russ Falkenberg, President/CEO

**R**inging in a new year sparks a sense of renewed hope and optimism about the future.

As the president and CEO of Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative, for me, it's a time to reflect on where we are and where we're going. At the heart of this reflection, I think about ways we can better serve you, the members of the cooperative.

Our team at CVEC is always looking ahead, exploring ways to innovate and utilize new technologies to improve our services. As our nation increasingly relies on electricity to power the economy, keeping the lights on has never been more important. We're committed to powering—and empowering—our community at a cost local families and businesses can afford.

So how are we working to ensure reliable and affordable power while adapting to a changing energy landscape and our community's evolving needs?

One critical component of reliable power is the mix of energy resources used to generate the electricity that keeps the lights on across CVEC. You may not realize it, but CVEC doesn't generate electricity. Instead, we purchase it from our energy provider, Dairyland Power Cooperative located in La Crosse, and from there, we distribute it to homes and businesses throughout our community. Our current energy resource mix is made up of 39% natural gas, 37% coal, 16% solar and wind, 8% other renewable energy.

We're increasingly using more electricity generated from renewable

energy sources, but we still depend on a diverse energy mix to ensure reliable power that's available to our members whenever they need it.

In addition to managing a reliable energy mix, CVEC is using technology to enhance our local grid, limit service disruptions, and improve outage response times.

Advanced metering technology, also known as AMI, enables two-way communication between the co-op and member-consumers. In the event of a power outage, AMI helps pinpoint the exact location of the outage and can even analyze damaged or tampered meters. AMI helps CVEC save money with real-time data, and ultimately improves power reliability for our entire community.

Proactive tree trimming and brush clearing are other ways we limit service disruptions. Scheduled trimming keeps power lines clear from overgrown limbs that are likely to fall. As technological advancements become more accessible, we anticipate using advanced mapping software to better maintain the rights-of-way while providing more reliable service.

One of the best methods for improving our services to you is monitoring trends and leading practices from other electric co-ops in Wisconsin and across the country. Learning from other co-ops is one of the many benefits of the cooperative business model because for us, it's about cooperation, not competition.

As we turn our focus to 2024, CVEC will continue working to provide the reliable, affordable electricity you expect and deserve—for today and tomorrow.



**We're committed to powering—and empowering—our community at a cost local families and businesses can afford.**

By the time these pages arrive Christmas will have passed, and the new year will already feel like it is speeding by. In all the busyness, we'd like to take the time to remind you that you matter. Maybe you think that sounds trite but if you live in our community, we think you've found these words to be true. Members who visit our office will always be greeted with a smile and small-town friendliness. We try every day to share Midwest Nice. That's who we are.

You matter to Chippewa Valley Electric Co-op. You do. Our members are in focus with every decision we make. Please call or email us when you have a question. We are happy to help.

And now, take a moment to tell your loved ones that they matter. Give them an unexpected hug. Write them an encouraging note to slide into a pocket or packed lunch. Take that little slice of time to make them feel special. Time slips away far too fast.

Many blessings to you and your loved ones in the new year.

# THERE'S STILL TIME!



## Consider Representing Your Cooperative as a Director

Director Election for Districts 1 and 6 at CVEC Annual Meeting

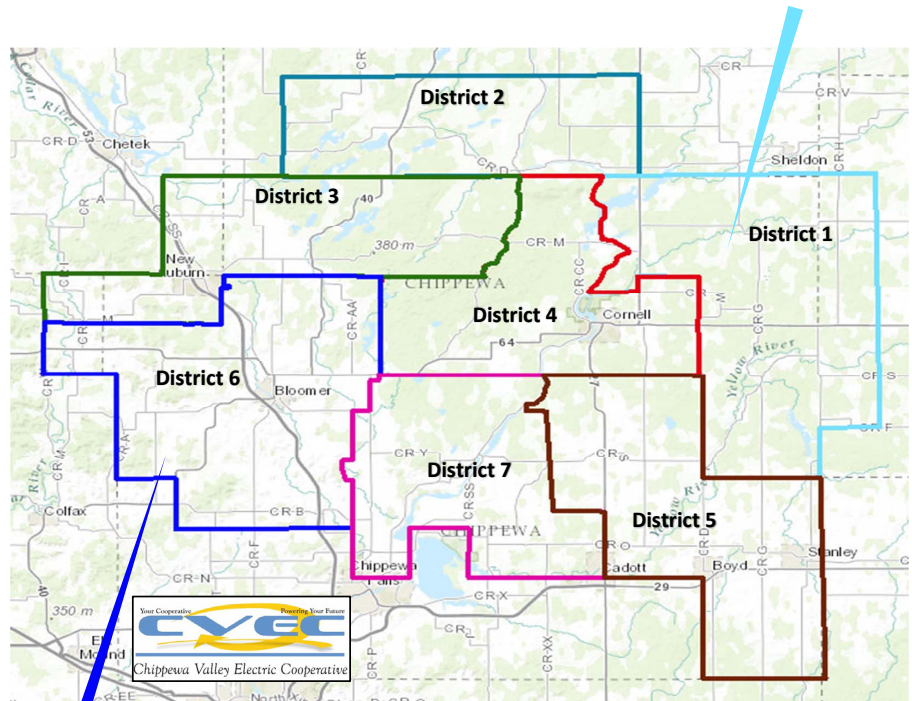
Paperwork Deadline: February 10, 2024

This is a reminder that if your primary residence is in District 1 or District 6, and you're interested in being a candidate for the upcoming director election at Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative's 87th annual meeting of members to be held March 26, 2024, the deadline for submitting your completed application is February 10, 2024.

The following board members are currently serving and have the option to campaign again for these positions:

### District 1 – Dan Liske 3-Year Term

This district includes portions of the Town of Lake Holcombe, Ruby, and the portion of the Town of Colburn located east of County Highway D, Chippewa County; the Town of Aurora, Taylor County; and those members of the cooperative whose service extensions lie within said town or portions of towns.

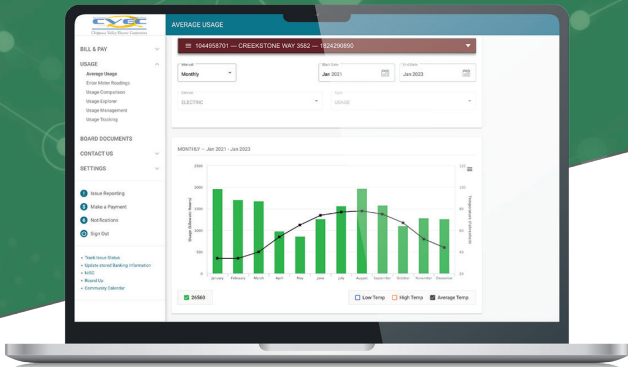


### District 6 – Steve Wall 3-Year Term

This district includes the southern half of the Town of Auburn, the entire Towns of Bloomer, Woodmohr, Cooks Valley, Tilden and Howard, Chippewa County; the southern half of the Town of Sand Creek, Dunn County; and those members of the cooperative whose service extensions lie within said towns.

For applications, or more details about board elections, contact Nicole at [nwsime@cve.coop](mailto:nwsime@cve.coop) or call 715.239.6800. The deadline for completed director candidate paperwork is February 10, 2024.

# SmartHub has a new look!



Beginning January 9 SmartHub will have a new look and feel, but will still contain all the powerful features that allow you to take control of your account like never before! SmartHub lets you manage all aspects of your Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative account through the web or using your mobile device.

SmartHub allows you to:

- **Set up bill reminders**
- **View billing and payment history**
- **Track your energy usage**
- **Update your account information**
- **Set up recurring payments**
- **View our outage map**

If you haven't registered for SmartHub, do it today – it's simple! You'll just need a valid email address and your account number. Download the free SmartHub app for your smartphone or tablet or access it online by clicking the green SmartHub icon in the upper right corner of our website at [www.cvecoop.com](http://www.cvecoop.com) and start improving your energy usage today!



## SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE TO HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

This spring, Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative (CVEC) will be awarding several scholarships to graduating high school seniors of member families through our Federated Youth Foundation Scholarship Program. The scholarship program is funded entirely from unclaimed patronage capital issued by the cooperative and from members who wish to donate their capital credits earnings to this program. Please contact CVEC if you wish to do so.

Each scholarship is worth \$500. Applications can be obtained from CVEC's website ([cvecoop.com](http://cvecoop.com)) or by contacting the cooperative office.

CVEC's scholarship program began in 1998, and since its inception has provided more than \$191,500 in scholarships to area students. An independent scholarship committee composed of retired educators scores the application based upon merit.

Eligibility will be determined according to the following criteria:

- The student must graduate during the 2023–2024 school year and be enrolled in a post-secondary program at a college, university, or vocational school.
- The applicant's parents (or legal guardians) must be members of Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative, and they must currently be receiving service.
- The applicant must display average or above-average academic records.
- The applicant's family income will not be a deciding factor in awarding the scholarships.



To apply for the scholarships, eligible applicants must complete an application about school activities, leadership positions, community involvement, awards and recognition. In addition, each applicant must write a 200-word essay about future goals and objectives, along with the student's values and attitude on life.

The completed scholarship applications must be returned to the cooperative office by April 1, 2024. The applications will be reviewed by a special Scholarship Committee, and the scholarships will be awarded to the students at an honors ceremony or at graduation.

If you have any questions about the scholarship program, please contact Nicole at Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative 715.239.6800 or [nwsime@cve.coop](mailto:nwsime@cve.coop).





Your Cooperative Powering Your Future

# Sparks CO-OP NEWS

CELEBRATING OUR CO-OP COMMUNITY!

## CVEC Annual Meeting, Save the Date: March 26

CVEC's 87th Annual Meeting of Members will be on Tuesday evening, March 26, at the cooperative's headquarters in Cornell. It's a good opportunity to learn about your cooperative while enjoying a dinner served by CVEC staff. Plus, there will be prizes! C'mon out and see your friends and neighbors. It's all about the cooperative community. Stay tuned for more details.



## Director Candidate Paperwork Due February 10

Is now the time for you to represent? District 1 and District 6 elections will be held at CVEC's Annual Meeting in March. Members whose primary residence is within District 1 or District 6 are eligible to run for candidacy. Please contact the cooperative if you are interested and we'll get you the information you need. The deadline to return all required documents is February 10.

## 2024 Rebate Program Launches

The new year brings a new rebate program. You may be eligible for a rebate on a recent investment in energy efficiency. Check out all of Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative's rebate offerings at [cvecoop.com](http://cvecoop.com) or call the office at 715.239.6800 for more details. Requirements state you must submit your rebate documents within three months of your purchase date. You don't want to miss out!



## SmartHub App Redesign

This month SmartHub users will notice a new look to the SmartHub app. All the same great features will be there, so don't fret. You can pay your electric bill, enroll in autopay or paperless billing, and monitor your energy usage on your account from anywhere. Download the free SmartHub app for your smartphone or tablet or access it online by clicking the green SmartHub icon in the upper right corner of our website at [www.cvecoop.com](http://www.cvecoop.com) and start improving your energy usage today!

## Spirit of Christmas Success

We had Christmas gifts galore for Chippewa County children. Thank you to all the CVEC employees, directors, and community members who participated in the annual gift collection for Chippewa County youth. Giving really is better than receiving.



Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative

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*This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*

## Board of Directors

- District 1 – Dan Liske
- District 2 – Steve Johnson
- District 3 – Frank Draxler
- District 4 – Kevin Meistad
- District 5 – Joe Melville
- District 6 – Steve Wall
- District 7 – John Petska

**Russ Falkenberg, Jr., President/CEO**



Follow us on Facebook Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 7:30–4 p.m.

**Nicole Whipp-Sime, Editor**