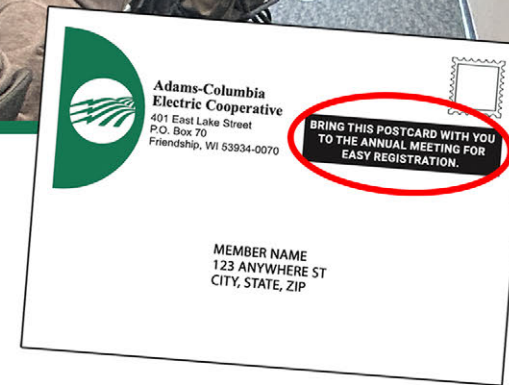







## Annual Meeting Issue



We invite all members to join us at our 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting on Thursday, May 14, at our Friendship office (401 E Lake St, Friendship, WI). Registration begins at 4 p.m. and the meeting begins at 5 p.m. Be sure to bring your Annual Meeting notice (postcard shown to the right) to the meeting for easy registration!



Your voting participation is highly encouraged for the upcoming director election. For more details on the Annual Meeting, visit our website at [www.acecwi.com/annual-meeting](http://www.acecwi.com/annual-meeting).

-  **Page 2 - How to Vote**
-  **Pages 3 & 4 - Director Candidates**
-  **Pages 5 & 6 - General Manager & Board Chair Report**
-  **Pages 7 & 8 - Cooperative Financials**
-  **Page 9 - Lineman Appreciation, YLC, and more**

Visit our website to review our Meeting Rules & Voting Procedures:  
[www.acecwi.com/meeting-rules-voting-procedures](http://www.acecwi.com/meeting-rules-voting-procedures)

## Calendar of Events

### APRIL 24

Our General Manager, Jon, will be at our Wautoma (8-11 a.m.) and Pardeeville (12:30-3 p.m.) offices for Discussion Day.

### MAY 1

Deadline to submit STEM Grant applications.  
  
For members on the Time-of-Day rate, the on-peak period changes.

### MAY 13 @ 12 P.M.

Voting closes for our absentee and online voting options. Voting in person will be on May 14 from 4-5 p.m.

### MAY 14

Join us at our Annual Meeting. Registration begins at 4 p.m. and the meeting begins at 5 p.m.

### MAY 25

Our office will be closed for Memorial Day. Normal business hours resume on May 26.

# How To Vote

Every year, we host an Annual Meeting to provide cooperative updates to our members and conduct our director elections. All members have the right to participate in our director election. Below are frequently asked questions along with a few snippets that show what our online voting site looks like. For more voting details, visit [www.acecwi.com/voting-options](http://www.acecwi.com/voting-options).

## What are my options to cast a ballot?

1. Request an absentee ballot by calling (800) 831-8629, emailing Stacey McManus at [smcmanus@acecwi.com](mailto:smcmanus@acecwi.com), or filling out the request form on our website. Ballots must be returned to our Friendship office by May 13 at 12 p.m.

2. Log in to your SmartHub account and click the "Vote Now" button to be directed to our voting site. Online voting closes May 13 at 12 p.m.

3. Attend our Annual Meeting on May 14 and cast a ballot in person from 4-5 p.m.

## Can I vote online and in person?

No. Once a ballot is cast, an electronic or absentee vote will not be discarded in favor of another voting method per our meeting rules and voting procedures.

## When does voting open?

Absentee and online voting are available April 1- May 13 at 12 p.m. In person voting will be at our Friendship office on May 14 from 4-5 p.m.

## What if I live in a district that isn't up for election?

All members are eligible to vote, regardless of the district you live in. You can cast a vote for one director per district that is on the ballot.

Our second cooperative principle is Democratic Member Control, which means we are controlled by our members (the elected board of directors) and all members have the right to cast a ballot.

This is a preview of the voting ballot, whether you access SmartHub on a desktop computer or mobile device.



### Desktop

**Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative**  
Empowering Our Communities  
2026 ACEC Director Election

To cast a vote:

- Check the box next to your selection.
- To change your vote, click the box again and the mark will be removed.
- To review your selections, click the "Go to Ballot Confirmation" button.
- You may save your ballot and return later by clicking the "Logout" link.
- If you would like a record of your votes, use the print icon on the next page.

**Director - District 4**  
Vote for up to 1

Jim Bays [View Bio](#)

**Director - District 6**  
Vote for up to 1

Gary Skolarz [View Bio](#)

**Director - District 7**  
Vote for up to 1

Becki Clayborn [View Bio](#)

Russell J. "Rusty" Schieber [View Bio](#)

Renee Wendt [View Bio](#)

### Mobile

**Director - District 4**  
Vote for up to 1

Jim Bays [View Bio](#)

**Director - District 6**  
Vote for up to 1

Gary Skolarz [View Bio](#)

**Director - District 7**  
Vote for up to 1

Becki Clayborn [View Bio](#)

Russell J. "Rusty" Schieber [View Bio](#)

Renee Wendt [View Bio](#)

# Director Candidates



**District 4**  
**Jim Bays**

I was born and raised in Adams and have a lifelong commitment to our community. I have served on the Adams-Friendship School Board for over 20 years, where I helped make decisions about planning, budgets, and policies that supported students, families, and staff.

I also currently serve on the Allied Cooperative Board of Directors. This role has helped me learn more about how cooperatives work, how utilities operate, and why member-owned organizations are important for providing reliable and affordable services.

Serving on the electric cooperative board would allow me to represent member-owners and help ensure dependable, reasonably priced electric service. I believe in the cooperative model and local decision-making.

Looking ahead, I believe the board should focus on keeping the system reliable, controlling rising costs, and planning for future energy needs. This includes investing in equipment, adjusting to new technology and rules, and keeping the cooperative financially strong. Clear communication with members and long-term planning will be key to keeping the cooperative strong for future generations.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions at [jbaysii@yahoo.com](mailto:jbaysii@yahoo.com) or 608-547-3106. I look forward to serving the members of Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative.



**District 6**  
**Gary Skolarz**

My name is Gary Skolarz and I am seeking reelection to the Adams Columbia Electric Cooperative (ACEC) Board of Directors.

I have been proudly serving on the board since the year 2020. Since then I have been honored to represent the membership of ACEC. I have been board secretary for the last 5 years and pride myself on being objective in addressing the decisions made at the board level.

I believe that all of our members deserve representation at the board level, from our largest manufacturers to our seasonal members.

On a personal level my wife and I live in Adams County, we have three adult children and one granddaughter. We enjoy spending time outdoors with our two dogs.

I look forward to continuing to serve the Adams Columbia Electric Cooperative's members in the future. Thank you for allowing me to represent our members.



**District 7**  
**Becki Clayborn**

Hi there! My name is Becki Clayborn and I live in the Town of Westford in Beaver Dam. I have been a professional advocate for Democracy and Responsible Clean Energy for over 30 years. I have been able to build bridges and meaningful conversations across diverse audiences to implement shared goals. I have successfully worked with grassroots community members, County Boards, City Boards, as well as with regulatory entities and lawmakers at both the State and Federal levels to pass and implement policies and legislation. Since joining Adams Columbia Electric Co-op, I have been impressed with the affordable and reliable service provided, and I would like to ensure that continues, while also protecting our rural way of life and natural resources. This will be a priority of mine as we see increased demand for energy in this state due to more and more data centers being proposed statewide. I will also be very interested in exploring the potential for more home energy efficiency and home-grown clean energy opportunities for our members. This could save money for our members and the Co-op, and play a role in grid stability and reliability. And finally, I will be a champion for increased transparency to ensure that information is easily accessed by our members, as well as identifying ways to increase input from our members. Rural Electric Co-ops are unique in their democratic structure, being member owned, and I want to ensure that our members can quickly understand what the leadership is doing and be able to bring ideas to the table. I love being part of an Electric Co-op where the decisions are more democratic and the money is reinvested into our area, instead of being at the mercy of a large utility that is profiting off of ratepayers. If you like the idea of reliability, affordability, energy efficiency, home grown electricity, protecting our rural way of life, as well as democratic decision-making, then I encourage you to vote for me for District 7 of the Adams Columbia Rural Electric Co-op. Contact me at [becki.clayborn@gmail.com](mailto:becki.clayborn@gmail.com) with questions or suggestions.



**District 7**  
**Russell J. "Rusty" Schieber**

I am the Vice President of Operations Support at Brakebush Brothers, Inc. leading the Sustainability/Environmental Management, Finished Goods Warehousing, Property Management and Government Relations areas.

Prior to returning to Wisconsin with my wife, Chari, to work in her family's business I was an Officer in the US Air Force working with the Minuteman 3 IBCM system.

I am a graduate of The University of Wisconsin and earned my graduate degree from The University of Montana.

Chari and I have four grown children and three grandchildren. I serve as a Board member of Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce (WMC), the WMC Foundation and former Chair of its Future Wisconsin Project. I am also the Immediate Past Chair of the Midwest Food Products Association serving many years on their Board and Executive Committee.

I have been associated with the US Paralympic Curling Team since 2008, leading the program as the National Coach, 2017-2022.

Energy availability and costs have been a study of mine for the past decade. According to a recent analysis (2025) by the Wisconsin Policy Forum, Wisconsin's electricity demand DECREASED from peak electrical demand of 15 gigawatts in 2006 to 14.6 gigawatts in 2024. This long-term flat demand for electricity allowed electrical producers to shutter coal and nuclear plants, replacing them with more politically acceptable green sources while still meeting demand. That has now rapidly changed...

With the influx of data centers to Wisconsin, power demand is now expected to increase to a projected high of 17.1 gigawatts within the next five years. Power utilities will be spending multiple billions of dollars on new power generation projects... solar, wind and natural gas plants will fill the short and mid-term void while consuming thousands of acres of prime agricultural land.

Reasonably priced electricity must remain readily available, 24/7, to Wisconsin's farmers, homeowners and business. How will we be managing this? How will this affect land use? How will competing interests be balanced? Those are my interests. I want to be part of the solution and why I am running for the Board of Directors of the Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative.



**District 7**  
**Renee Wendt**

My name is Renee Wendt. I am running for my second term as a Director with Adams Columbia Electric Cooperative (ACEC). The past three years I have been able to meet a number of you at annual meetings and Meet the Manager Meetings. It has been a privilege to serve you as your director. I have spoken with a few of you on the phone discussing billing concerns, the opportunities for ACEC to invest in renewable electric generation, and future time of use billing. Those are the heavy topics, the relaxed ones occurred standing in line at the annual meeting and learning about your families and your lives. The ACEC employees are in the background making sure we have reliable electricity.

I have learned many things this past term as ACEC continues to focus on using our money in the wisest ways to develop and maintain our electric services. Future growth and cost controls are a monthly focus at the board meetings. Jon Congdon has a strong team working to keep our lights on and cell phones charged. As a director, I have asked many questions about new technology and how it will best serve us.

Since I ran for my first term, I have sent two daughters off to college and treasure the few years left with our younger two children. I continue to serve as the clerk for my township. Wise fiscal management is not limited to ACEC. We are all struggling with increased costs and taxes. My weekly joy is teaching 1st-3rd grade students, with my husband, in Sunday School. What a joy being able to teach and encourage the next generation to grow. The biggest silver lining are friends and neighbors in my rural area. They are available for a good joke or story most days. Relying on one another is what makes rural communities thrive.

Thank you for trusting me to represent you as your Adams Columbia Electric Cooperative director. I appreciate your vote again in the May election. I would enjoy hearing from you, please contact me at (262) 573-7305 with any questions.





**Pictured l-r: Board Chair Aaron Hoernke & General Manager Jon Congdon**

# General Manager & Board Chair Report

## Reliability

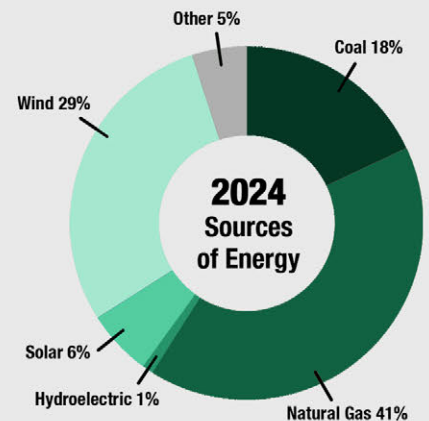
Electricity isn't a luxury like it was 80 years ago; it's a critical part of our daily lives. Whenever you want to charge your phone, watch the big game, or host a family holiday event, we're there for you. At times, power outages may occur that are out of our control, but we do our best to restore those outages as quickly and safely as possible. In 2025, our members had power approximately 99.9988% of the time.

To continue our commitment to reliable service to you, we're building additional infrastructure and continuing to perform maintenance on our distribution system. This includes line patrol, pole changes, and other necessary upgrades. Last year, we added the new Dixie substation to our system, which is located about five miles southeast of Adams. We'll begin work on our new Colburn substation this year to serve our members for years to come.

## Clean Energy

As a distribution system, we don't generate our own electricity; we purchase our power from Alliant Energy. Through Bright Ideas, our member engagement survey on our website, we've heard from members how important it is to them to have clean, renewable energy. Similar to the fact that we don't generate our own electricity, we reap the benefits of clean energy from Alliant Energy.

Their most recent Climate Report indicates that 36% of their energy sources come from renewable energy. Ultimately, Alliant's energy mix is our energy mix since we purchase power from them.



## Legislative Engagement

As topics and bills related to electric cooperatives are introduced at the state and national levels, we dive into how they will impact our members and the cooperative.



Our focus is to keep our members front of mind, ensure grid reliability, cooperative governance, and consumer protection.

## Rates

Through our Bright Ideas survey, rates topped the chart for the topic that members want to hear more about. Reviewing rates is a slow process, and we conduct a cost of service study every three to five years to ensure rates align with the cost of power and maintenance to our system. Our rates are based on the different electrical needs of our members. A residential home requires different equipment than a large campground, farm, or business. Not only do we factor in the equipment needed to serve different types of services, but we also look into how much energy they use.

Saving money and energy is a big priority for our members. To help guide members, we advertise energy-saving tips, promote rebates available through Focus on Energy, and encourage members to explore our Time-of-Day rate. To learn more about our rates, visit [www.acecwi.com/billing/rate-info](http://www.acecwi.com/billing/rate-info).



## \$4 Million Special Patronage Capital Retirement

As a cooperative, any additional margins we have each year are refunded to our members through patronage capital.

We're happy to announce that your board of directors has approved a special \$4 million patronage capital retirement (refund) to members who had service with us in 2025. The board of directors reviewed year-end financials, which indicated that our excess margins were due to:

- Day-to-day efficiencies at the co-op
- We came under budget in other areas across the co-op
- We're secure in our operating margins
- Lower than budgeted power supply costs
- Strong cash flow, particularly from our investment in West Riverside Energy Center



Refund To  
Members

Returning patronage capital reflects the cooperative principle of members sharing in the financial success of the organization they own. This special retirement is in addition to the general retirement we process typically in the fall every year. Bill credits will be applied to accounts during the June billing period. If your retirement amount is over \$600, you can expect a check in the mail.

## Eye On The Future

Keeping up with advancements in technology is nothing new; however, the increasing need for electric generation and the pressure of demand on our grid have been top of mind. The needs of our members have drastically changed over the last 30-50 years. We used to talk about electrification in the household, and today we're talking about the impact of data centers and artificial intelligence.



There is a lack of transmission lines being built due to hurdles with environmental concerns, regulatory holdups, and consumer pushback. We understand people don't want a massive transmission line on their property, but our industry is facing a great need for additional generation. Once that generation is built (a new solar field, for example), we need to have a way to transport that electricity to keep up with the demand.



There's been a lot of research and development surrounding nuclear energy. It's forecasted that small modular reactors may start to come online in the 2030's. The challenge now is to find a nuclear design that is cost-effective, safe for our environment, and can minimize the impact on communities.



Battery storage is another buzzword recently, but it isn't entirely the answer. Storing energy and releasing it onto the grid helps alleviate the energy stress during peak demand times, but batteries don't contribute to 24/7 energy generation that our members need.



Virtual power plants are another concept you may have heard about. This is when utilities partner with members that have smart grid technologies (like electric vehicle chargers, solar panels, smart thermostats, and battery storage) to "sell power" back to the grid. To be clear, we are not offering this and we are not planning to at this time. We believe it's up to the member to determine how they want to manage these smart grid features.

“ As we plan for the future, our vision is to be our members' trusted source of safe, reliable electricity, superior customer service, and community support. Having a balance of coal, nuclear, natural gas, and renewable energy generation sources gives our industry flexibility. We're committed to the members we serve, the communities we live in, and the rural landscape we call home. ”

# Statement of Operations

What We Took In	2025	2024
Operating Revenue	88,699,713	80,863,501

What We Paid Out	2025	2024
Power Production Expense (Riverside)	(7,316,335)	(7,137,827)
Cost of Purchased Power	55,423,638	52,736,616
Distribution Expense	8,556,718	8,045,431
Customer Service & Sales Expense	2,177,906	2,094,760
Administrative & General Expense	4,029,664	3,861,948
Depreciation Expense	10,649,801	10,294,793
Taxes	1,446,395	1,244,568
Interest on Long-Term Debt	<u>5,985,832</u>	<u>5,956,058</u>
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>80,953,619</b>	<b>77,096,346</b>

What We Have Left	2025	2024
Net Operating Margins	7,746,095	3,767,154
Interest Income	362,716	363,774
Non-Operating Income	4,321,300	3,130,616
Patronage Capital	<u>607,831</u>	<u>702,656</u>
<b>Net Margins</b>	<b><u>13,037,942</u></b>	<b><u>7,964,201</u></b>

## 2025 In Review

Kilowatt Hours Sold to Members  
**623,601,344**

Average Residential Use Per Month  
**895**

Number of Members  
**33,073**

Number of Services  
**39,829**

Number of Employees  
**75**

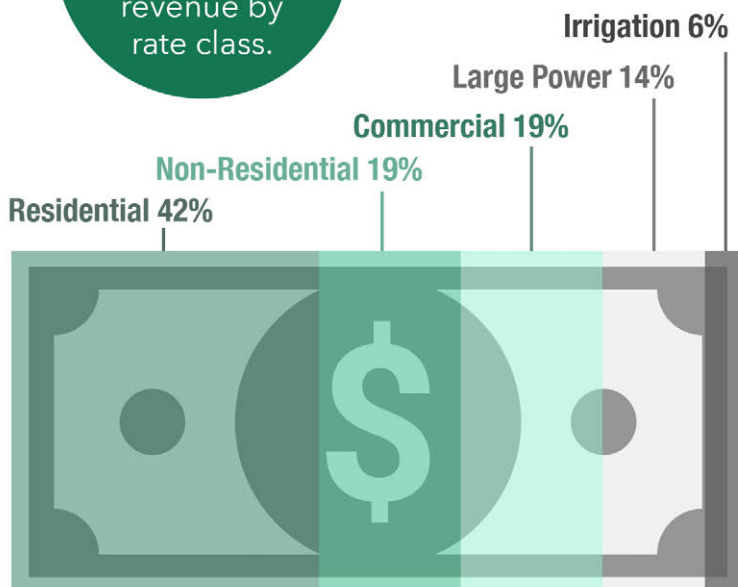
Miles of Overhead Line  
**1,661**

Miles of Underground  
**3,851**

Patronage Capital Retirements to Date  
**\$88,411,173**

### 2025 Revenue Dollar

This is the percent of revenue by rate class.



### Taxes 2%

Customer 3%

General Admin 5%

Interest 7%

Distribution 11%

Depreciation 13%

Purchased Power 59%



### 2025 Expense Dollar

Here's how your dollar was spent.

# Balance Sheet

Assets	2025	2024
Total Utility Plant	332,814,644	320,490,944
Less Accumulated Depreciation	<u>111,174,569</u>	<u>103,016,314</u>
<b>Net Utility Plant</b>	<b>221,640,075</b>	<b>217,474,630</b>
Investments in Associated Organizations	27,699,906	27,542,622
Investments in Economic Development Projects	1,027,482	1,038,127
Other Investments	<u>2,359,909</u>	<u>408,989</u>
<b>Total Other Property &amp; Investments</b>	<b>31,087,297</b>	<b>28,989,737</b>
Cash & Short-Term Investments	553,892	817,261
Accounts Receivable-Net	9,844,826	7,967,567
Materials & Supplies	4,536,264	4,890,362
Interest Receivable	61,718	53,914
Other Current & Accrued Assets	<u>1,896,382</u>	<u>1,388,264</u>
<b>Total Current &amp; Accrued Assets</b>	<b>16,893,082</b>	<b>15,117,368</b>
<b>Deferred Debits</b>	<b><u>224,973</u></b>	<b><u>237,891</u></b>
<b>Total Assets &amp; Other Debits</b>	<b><u>269,845,427</u></b>	<b><u>261,819,626</u></b>

Liabilities	2025	2024
Long-Term Debt Economic Development	727,379	780,288
Long-Term Debt	<u>137,018,211</u>	<u>134,230,017</u>
<b>Total Long-Term Debt</b>	<b>137,745,590</b>	<b>135,010,304</b>
Accounts Payable	1,270,292	4,508,830
Consumer Deposits	1,600,658	1,638,849
Other Current & Accrued Liability	<u>3,407,868</u>	<u>3,268,348</u>
<b>Total Current &amp; Accrued Liabilities</b>	<b>6,278,818</b>	<b>9,416,027</b>
<b>Deferred Credits</b>	<b>1,645,816</b>	<b>1,853,189</b>
Patronage Capital	91,078,170	87,293,110
Other Equities	<u>33,097,033</u>	<u>28,246,996</u>
<b>Total Margins &amp; Other Equities</b>	<b><u>125,821,019</u></b>	<b><u>117,393,295</u></b>
	<b>269,845,427</b>	<b>261,819,626</b>

Together, these two statements outline the cooperative's stability and year-to-year financial performance. The balance sheet helps show whether we have the financial strength to maintain and improve our distribution system, while the statement of operations shows whether we collected enough to cover costs.

Margins are retained to support the operations and future of the cooperative and, over time, returned to members through patronage capital.

# Lineman Appreciation

Our crews are always ready when it matters most—leaving family dinners, working through the night, and heading into challenging conditions to restore power as safely and quickly as possible. That readiness is not accidental. It comes from rigorous training and a shared commitment to serving our members.

We understand the frustrations any time the lights go out, bringing everyday life to a halt. We're incredibly grateful to our members for your patience and encouragement during these times. Linework is demanding, physical, and at times, it can be dangerous. Our crews approach each job with a focus on safety and teamwork.

On April 18, we celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day, but one day is hardly enough. Every day, we thank our team of safety professionals for their service and dedication to our members.

- **Friendship Linemen:** Garrett, Eric K., Tim, Garin, Bryce, Garri, Logan
- **Pardeeville Linemen:** Chris C., Bill K., Brett, Jason H., Don, Kurt
- **Wautoma Linemen:** Brian S., Jason K., Ryan, Brian M., Tom, Lucas



**Adams-Columbia  
Electric Cooperative**

## CONTACT US

Customer Service & Billing  
(800) 831-8629

Outages & Payments  
(855) 957-3881

Diggers Hotline  
(800) 242-8511 or 811

Email  
acec@acecwi.com

Website  
www.acecwi.com

Follow us on social media  
@ACECWI

Business Hours  
Monday - Friday,  
7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Friendship Lobby Hours  
Monday - Friday,  
8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Friendship Office  
P.O. Box 70  
401 East Lake Street  
Friendship, WI 53934

Pardeeville Office (Drop Box Only)  
W6290 State Road 33  
Pardeeville, WI 53954

Wautoma Office (Drop Box Only)  
N1519 State Road 22  
Wautoma, WI 54982

# Patronage Capital Allocations

On your May bill statement in the bill message area, you'll see your patronage allocation. You can think of allocations as a piece of ownership in our cooperative based on how much your electric bill is over the course of the year. Over time, your allocations are refunded to you as approved by your board of directors. Learn more about patronage capital at [www.acecwi.com/patronage-cap](http://www.acecwi.com/patronage-cap).

# Youth Leadership Conference (YLC)

Youth Leadership Conference will be July 14-16 at UW-Stout, and students can now register to attend! Students currently in their sophomore or junior year of high school are encouraged to register for this fun, three-day leadership event. The deadline to register is Friday, June 5. Visit our website for more information about YLC and to register today: [www.acecwi.com/ylc](http://www.acecwi.com/ylc).



Did you know you can vote for your board of directors through SmartHub?



# APRIL IS SAFE DIGGING MONTH

Whether you're planting a garden or installing new fence posts, remember to dial 811 before you dig. Let's work together to keep our communities safe and prevent damage to underground utilities. When you contact 811, they will notify relevant utility companies to mark underground lines, free of charge, using colored flags or paint. This process usually only takes a few days.

Different colors are used to mark underground utilities, and each color is universal:



## Briefing of the Board Meeting

February 24, 2026

### Board Action Items:

- Approved Operation Round-Up reappointments
- Approved January GM expenses
- Approved January board vouchers

View the full meeting summary on our website: [www.acecwi.com/news-information/meeting-mins](http://www.acecwi.com/news-information/meeting-mins)

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

As we prepare for the seasonal shift, remember to set your ceiling fan rotation accordingly. In winter months (or whenever your home heating system is running), fan blades should rotate clockwise, which produces an updraft that pushes warm air down. In summer months (or whenever your home cooling system is running), blades should rotate counter-clockwise, which produces a downdraft or windchill effect that makes you feel cooler. When used correctly, ceiling fans can boost comfort and allow you to adjust the thermostat a few degrees for energy savings.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)

## BROCCOLI GRAPE SALAD

### INGREDIENTS

- 4 c fresh broccoli
- 1 c chopped celery
- 1/2 c chopped green onion
- 1/2 c bacon crumbles
- 2/3 c slivered almonds
- 2 c red and/or green grapes
- 1 c mayonnaise
- 1/2 c sugar
- 1 Tbsp vinegar

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Wash broccoli and use florets only. Set aside. Finely cut celery and onions.
2. Fry bacon until crispy. Place bacon on a paper towel and crumble.
3. In a large bowl, alternate broccoli, grapes, almonds, onions, bacon, and celery into large bowl. In a separate bowl, mix mayonnaise, sugar, and vinegar until smooth. Pour the dressing over the salad mixture and toss.



Recipe from Kathy Wurster of Pewaukee, WI