



# News FOR YOU...

Barron Electric Cooperative  
March 2021  
*Photo by Mason Williams*

## Survey Indicates High Marks for Electric Cooperatives

Electric cooperatives score higher than their utility counterparts according to a Touchstone Energy Cooperative Survey on the Cooperative Difference. Cooperatives averaged a score of 85, compared to 72 for investor-owned and municipal

utilities, on the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI). The 2020 survey involved almost 11,500 interviews. Survey results indicated:

- Members are shifting their preference to digital communications, choosing to

receive communications by text or e-mail.

- More members are moving to online billing to save money and reduce waste.

Barron Electric has shifted to digital communications and offers online billing. Members can access their account in SmartHub at [barronelectric.com](http://barronelectric.com). Members can view their usage, pay their bill, choose to go paperless, sign up for Auto Pay, and contact our office. Members who have their e-mail address on file will receive a monthly e-newsletter filled with energy saving tips, events, and cooperative news.

### Barron Electric Scores an 87

Barron Electric members gave the cooperative a score of 87 on the ACSI survey conducted in 2019. ACSI is the only uniform, national, cross industry measure of satisfaction. ACSI measures four key areas: overall customer satisfaction, how a utility measures up to expectations, how it compares to an "ideal" utility, and customer loyalty.



Employees created an 87, the score members gave the cooperative after completing an ACSI survey in 2019.



# Reducing Air Emissions in Wisconsin

The 2020 Wisconsin Air Quality Trends Report from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources indicates Wisconsin's air quality is improving with 95 percent of people living in areas that meet all federal air quality standards. This includes all of Dairyland's service territory in Wisconsin. The report shows reductions in air pollutant emissions between 2012-2017. During this time, Dairyland Power Cooperative, Barron Electric's wholesale power supplier, invested significantly in control equipment and decommissioned five Alma Site coal units. Dairyland also added nearly 275 MW of renewable capacity to its generation portfolio.



## Energy Efficiency Tip

Replace standard power strips to save energy. Advanced power strips look like ordinary power strips, but they have built-in features that are designed to reduce the amount of energy used by standby electronics that consume energy even when they're not in use (also known as phantom load). The National Renewable Energy Laboratory estimates that the average home loses \$200 annually to energy wasted by phantom load.

Source: [www.nrel.gov](http://www.nrel.gov)

# Extreme Cold May Affect March Electric Bills

Members may notice that their electric bills were higher this month due to the extreme cold temperatures that took place in February. Members can access their usage history at SmartHub at [barronelectric.com](http://barronelectric.com).



Members can view their usage at SmartHub at [barronelectric.com](http://barronelectric.com), as well as make a payment, sign up for AutoPay, and contact our office. To set-up an account, you will need your Barron Electric account number.

## Employee Spotlight



Meet Jason Kircher, one of nineteen linemen working at Barron Electric who help to provide reliable power and maintain the electric system. Jason graduated from Spooner High School and has a degree from Chippewa Valley Technical College in Electrical Power Distribution. Jason worked at Zielies Tree Service prior to starting at Barron Electric. He enjoys hunting and fishing. Jason and his wife, Mandi, live in Shell Lake. Jason remarked, "I enjoy the variety of tasks we are faced with while maintaining and improving the system to ensure our members have safe and reliable service."



# #POWERON

# Pete's Trailer Sales Featuring High Quality Products

Barron Electric is proud to feature Pete's Trailer Sales, located on Barron Electric lines. Pete Betley bought his first PJ gooseneck trailer for hauling hay and using on the farm. Noticing how well built they were, he decided everyone should own one. He started selling a few trailers and bought more as the demand grew. His office consisted of his kitchen table, and he hired a few employees to help with the increase in demand. In 2008, he purchased the farm and land right along Highway 53 in Rice Lake and built a new office and shop. Today, the business has grown to fifteen employees.

"We usually have 700 trailers in stock on our lot. Since COVID, there has been a material shortage, so our in-stock supply is lower than we would like," commented Lacey Kolenda, Chief Administrative Officer. She added, "We do have 500 trailers currently on order, which will be arriving over the next few months."

Pete's Trailer Sales carries a wide variety of new and used equipment. They also have a full-service shop and sell parts and accessories. For more information, visit them at [petetrailersales.com](http://petetrailersales.com) or call 715-234-1993. Do you have a business that you would like to see featured? Please e-mail [memberservices@barronelectric.com](mailto:memberservices@barronelectric.com)



*Pete's Trailer Sales carries a variety of new and used trailers to meet your needs.*

*Owner Pete Betley established Pete's Trailer Sales to provide customers with quality products at the best price.*



## Pete's Trailer Sales carries the following trailers:

- Steel PJ trailers including gooseneck for maximum load surface and strength, up to 30,000 pound capacity
- Car hauler trailers for safe car transport
- Utility trailers and dump trailers
- Hillsboro Aluminium Truck Beds
- PJ Steel Truck Beds
- Aluminum Utilities and Carhaulers by Hillsboro and H&H
- Aluminum and Steel Enclosed made by Legend
- Steel Enclosed by H&H.

## Smart Home Technology to Fit Your Budget

Today, there are several inexpensive options for smart home devices that can fit your budget. Here are a few products to get you started.

### Smart Plugs

Reduce your energy usage with a smart plug. You can program automatic shut-off times to prevent devices from drawing energy when they're not in use. There are lots of options for inexpensive and well-performing smart plugs available under \$20.

### Smart Light Bulbs

Smart light bulbs are among the cheapest and easiest smart devices to install in your home. They can be controlled through your phone or

by voice if connected to your smart home speaker. Features include the ability to choose different lighting colors and shades, dimness levels and the ability to turn them on or off entirely. Prices range from \$8 to \$20 per bulb.

### Smart Home Speaker

A smart home speaker acts as a smart home hub for other smart devices. Each speaker comes with a voice assistant, like Amazon's Alexa or Google Assistant, which helps to control additional smart devices in your home. Amazon Echo Dot and Google Home Mini can cost as little as \$30 or less and can still offer nearly all the same features as their larger versions.

When buying more than one smart home device, make sure the devices are compatible with your smarthome hub to ensure the best performance of all devices. Access to a secure and stable Wi-Fi connection will be crucial to using the technology properly.



*A Google Home Mini can play music, create calendar appointments, and add items to your shopping list.*

# Photo Contest

Winner receives a \$50 Credit

E-mail your spring photos for our photo contest. The winning photo will be used on the cover of the *News for You*, and the winner will receive a \$50 credit on their electric bill. Criteria for the photos include:

- Photos must have a horizontal orientation (landscape).
- Photos must be high resolution, at least 300 dpi.
- Member must own rights to the photo.
- E-mail your digital image to [memberservices@barronelectric.com](mailto:memberservices@barronelectric.com) by March 8, 2021. Include your Barron Electric account number, address, and phone number.
- By submitting your photo, you are granting Barron Electric permission to use your photo in a variety of publications and on our website.



Crews changed a pole and added equipment along a 3-phase line to improve both safety and reliability in the Long Lake area.

## \*Condensed Board Minutes December 23, 2020



\* View full board minutes on SmartHub.

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Barron Electric is an equal  
opportunity provider.

**Patricia Mandel represents District 6 on Barron Electric's Board of Directors which includes the townships of Clinton, Barron, Maple Grove, and Prairie Lake.**



- Director Kessler gave the treasurer's report. A report of vouchers for the month was presented as part of the board packet as follows: #98341 thru #98479 of CCF Bank was in the amount of \$379,841 and capital credit estate checks in the amount of \$26,489. Director Kessler reported on activity of total receipts in the office - \$2,241,447; total receipts by wire and ACH - \$916,746; disbursements by ACH, EFT, wire - \$2,664,185; transfer of funds was made for payroll - \$91,068 and power bill paid 12/30/2020 in the amount of \$1,825,928.
- A membership list of 88 was presented and approved without objection by the board.
- Form 219 summarizing construction activity for the month of October in the amount of \$167,579.25 was presented for approval, and included new services - \$25,898.50; change jobs - \$37,742.69; miscellaneous - \$103,938.06 and 2 retirements. The Form 219 stood approved as presented.