



The Energizer

FEBRUARY 2025 | STEUBEN RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

DO YOU SMARTHUB?

You have the power to:

- pay your bill
- manage your account
- monitor your usage & more!



Are you tired of juggling through piles of bills? Say goodbye to billing and usage headaches and say hello to SmartHub. SmartHub revolutionizes the way you manage your accounts. SmartHub is your ultimate tool for taking control of your account with ease and efficiency. Let's dive into how SmartHub can transform your experience.

Billing & Payments Made Simple. No more waiting for snail mail to deliver your bills. With SmartHub, you can access your bill anytime, anywhere! Plus, enjoy hassle-free payment options to dodge those pesky late fees and service disruptions.

Alerts & Notifications. Stay in the loop with important account updates right at your fingertips. Say goodbye to endless hold times - receive timely alerts via email or text message and make informed decisions about your account with ease.

Go Green with Paperless Billing. Want to save time and a tree simultaneously? Activate SmartHub's paperless billing feature for an eco-friendly, instant bill access solution.

Usage Monitoring for Peace of Mind. Worried about unexpected bill shocks? SmartHub will become your favorite tool when it comes to evaluating your electric usage. You can view your usage with the Average Usage, Usage Comparison, Usage Explorer, and Usage Tracking charts. The weather, number of days in your billing cycle, electric usage, daily information, and more can be viewed with these charts. Compare usage month-to-month or to a previous year all with the usage graphs available in SmartHub.

Report Power Outage. When you log into your SmartHub account, you can report power outages for your electric service. Reporting your outages lets us know what exact locations are without power. While you're logged in, be sure to sign up for outage notifications too! We'll keep you updated if there is a interruption in your service.

Service Status. Displays service interruption and outage information.

SmartHub puts YOU in the driver's seat, offering complete control over your account with the right tools and information precisely when you need them. Say hello to stress-free bill management and make smarter decisions effortlessly. Ready to experience the power of SmartHub? Download the app or visit our website today and take charge of your accounts like never before!

How to Register Your SmartHub Account:

1. Go to www.steubenrec.coop. Click on the "Online Bill Pay" button in the upper right hand corner of the page.
2. From the SmartHub login screen, click on "Don't have an account? Register now."
3. Enter your billing account number, last name or business name and the email you want to use for your SmartHub account. Then click continue.
4. Enter the requested account information in order to verify your identity. Answers must match account information exactly. Then check the box next to "I'm not a Robot". Then click register.
5. If successful, you'll get a notification like this - "Congratulations". Your registration is complete. You will receive an e-mail with instructions for setting your password.
6. Check your inbox for an email labeled "SmartHub Registration". The email will state "Your SmartHub registration was successful". Please click the link below to verify your account and set your password.
7. Click on the blue hyperlink "Verify Account".
8. Create and confirm the password. Click Save.
9. Congratulations! You are now logged into SmartHub.

Bath Office, 9 Wilson Avenue, Bath, NY 14810
Phone: (607) 776-4161 or (800) 843-3414
Office Hours: Monday - Friday 7:30 am - 4:00 pm

CC Office, 5966 South Rd, Cherry Creek, NY 14723
Phone: (716) 296-5651 or (800) 883-8236
Office Hours: Monday - Friday 7:00 am - 3:30 pm

Steuben Rural Electric : 2024 Year in Review and Plans for 2025

In 2024, Steuben Rural Electric Cooperative embarked on one of its largest system improvement projects to date: rebuilding over 30 miles of electric line. This ambitious project, which included pole replacements and the installation of new wire, began along County Route 12 in Thurston and surrounding areas. Upon completion, contract crews moved to the northwest portion of Steuben County, focusing on the Towns of Co-hocton and Avoca.

Over the past five years, the Cooperative has aggressively rebuilt and upgraded its system to enhance reliability. These efforts are already paying off, with noticeable improvements in reliability in the areas where construction has been completed.

FEMA Projects Strengthen Infrastructure in Flood-Prone Areas

The Cooperative is also making significant progress on three FEMA-funded projects in the southwest portion of Steuben County. These areas have experienced reliability issues caused by flooding and its residual effects. One of these projects has been completed, while the remaining two are ongoing. Collectively, the three projects have brought in nearly \$5 million in FEMA funding, with no local cost share for our members. This external funding underscores our commitment to securing resources that improve reliability without adding financial burden to our ratepayers.

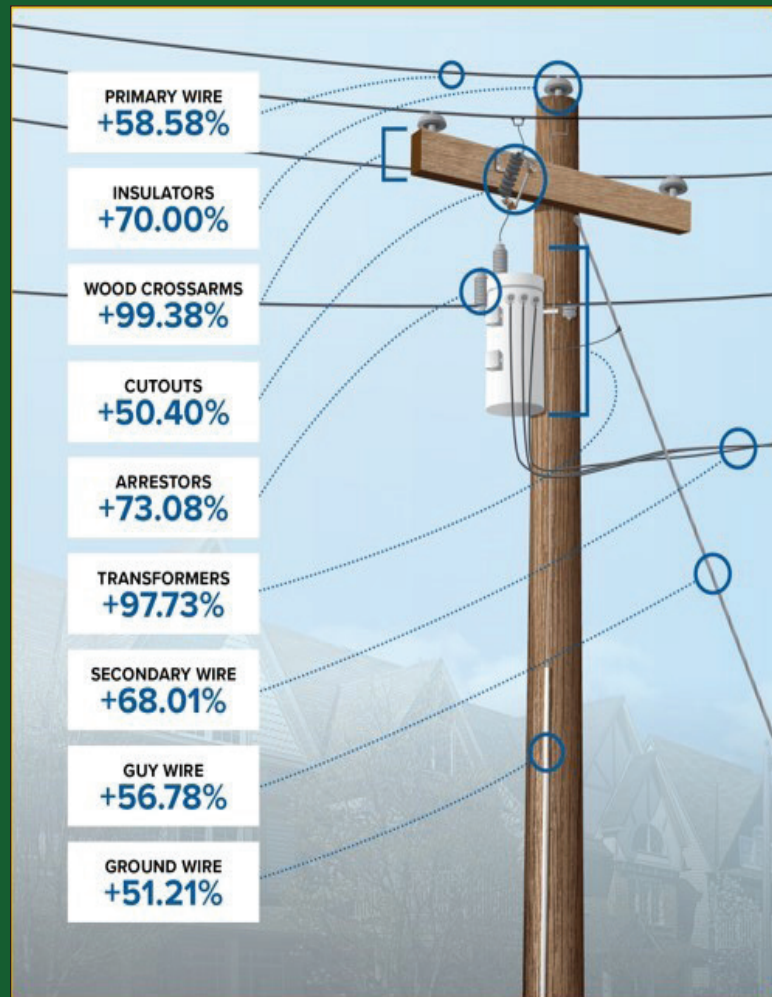
Supporting Broadband Expansion

In addition to major construction projects, our internal crews have been hard at work on pole change-outs to support broadband expansion. Empire Telephone has submitted applications to attach to nearly 2,000 poles across our system, targeting unserved and underserved communities such as the Town of Hornby. These efforts will help bring critical broadband access to rural areas, fostering connectivity and economic development.

Vegetation Management: A Key to Reliability

Tree clearing and vegetation management have also been significant focuses in 2024. The Cooperative cleared nearly 130 miles of rights-of-way (ROW) in the southeast portion of Steuben County, helping to ensure a more reliable electric system. In 2025, the vegetation management program will expand to the Towns of Conewango, Napoli, Leon, and New Albion in Cattaraugus County, as well as the Towns of Canisteo, Greenwood, and West Union in Steuben County. Our goal is to clear approximately 140 miles of ROW next year.

We are also optimistic about a new source of funding for vegetation management. In October 2024, we were awarded a Department of Energy (DOE) grant, which, if finalized, will inject considerable resources into this vital program. Maintaining vegetation along our 1,100 miles of ROW is a costly but essential task to keep our system reliable. Rising costs have made this work increasingly challenging, but this potential funding could be a game-changer for our members.



Looking Ahead

The Cooperative's investments in infrastructure, broadband expansion, and vegetation management reflect our commitment to delivering safe, reliable, and affordable power to our members. With nearly \$5 million in FEMA funding, the possibility of additional DOE grant support, and a robust plan for 2025, Steuben Rural Electric Cooperative continues to lead the way in strengthening rural infrastructure and meeting the needs of our community. 832115

The Rising Cost of Infrastructure: Challenges for Electric Co-ops

Over the past several years, Steuben Rural Electric Cooperative, like many electric utilities nationwide, has faced unprecedented challenges due to the rising cost of essential infrastructure materials. Between January 2020 and July 2024, the costs of key components necessary for maintaining and upgrading our electric system have skyrocketed. These increases are detailed in a recent analysis provided by United Utility Supply, one of our major suppliers, and are a stark reminder of the financial pressures electric cooperatives must navigate.

Material Cost Increases at a Glance

The illustration shown above highlights just some of the major increases in prices of materials. These rising costs directly impact our ability to rebuild and modernize critical infrastructure while keeping electric rates affordable for our members. As you can see, all of the components that make up a utility pole have gone up a minimum of 50%, and these are materials used on a daily basis. These items are a necessity in serving the cost of labor as well.

(Continue page 6)



BURNING WOOD

- Hours of Labor
- Tons of Harmful Emissions
- Low Indoor Air Quality
- Uneven Heat Distribution
- Heat for \$13/MBTU
- No Air Conditioning

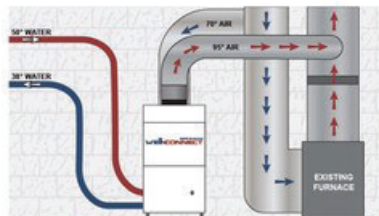
VS.

WELL-CONNECT

- Zero Labor
- Zero Emissions
- High Indoor Air Quality
- Even Heat Distribution
- Heat for \$6/MBTU
- Affordable Air Conditioning

WHY WELL-CONNECT?

Well-Connect is a geothermal heat pump specifically designed for rural homeowners to drastically reduce their heating & cooling costs while improving the comfort of their homes, year-round.



HEAT FOR AS LOW AS \$600 ALL WINTER



COOL FOR AS LOW AS \$50 ALL SUMMER



REDUCE DEPENDENCY ON PROPANE, FUEL OIL, OR WOOD



ADD TO YOUR EXISTING FURNACE IN ONE DAY

\$3,000 SREC/NYSERDA Rebate

PLUS 30% FEDERAL TAX CREDIT AND 25% NY STATE INCOME TAX CREDIT

Get Started with \$0 Down

Trusted by Thousands

See what homeowners are saying about Well-Connect.



"When I could no longer physically cut 20 cords of wood, I installed a Well-Connect. The system has met all claims and surprised me. If people are heating and cooling with propane, fuel oil, or wood and have their own well, they can cut their heating & cooling costs by at least half (as well as emissions)."

— Jess S.



"Now my home is so much more comfortable. No more drafts or cold rooms in my house. I no longer need space heaters and only burn wood when I want."

— Charles S.



"We saved \$2000 the first year and only filled our propane tank once compared to three times in previous years, and kept our home 5 degrees warmer. Thank you Well-Connect!"

— Mike S.

VALUE GEOTHERMAL
Your Local Well-Connect Installer
Value Geothermal
Canisteo, NY
(607) 290-3559

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Visit wellconnectgeo.com or contact SREC at 607-776-4161 to Learn More. No Home Visit Required for a Free Estimate.





P.O. Box 128, Hartwick, NY 13348

Delaware County Electric Co-op
Oneida-Madison Electric Co-op
Otsego Electric Co-op
Steuben Rural Electric Co-op

Phone: (607) 293-6622
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For Immediate Release: December 10, 2024

NEW YORK STATE RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION REACTS TO NYPA'S NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING TO INCREASE ELECTRIC RATES

The New York Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NYSRECA) joins with the New York Association of Public Power (NYAPP) in voicing our concern and alarm with the action taken today by the Board of Trustees of the New York Power Authority (NYPA). NYPA issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that would almost triple the rates NYPA charges to NYSRECA and NYAPP members for renewable hydropower from the Niagara Power Project. The rates charged to NYSRECA and NYAPP members are to be set at the “lowest rates reasonably possible” under federal and state law.

NYPA's Notice allows public comment on NYPA's Rate Modification Plan, which increases current rates for power from \$12.88/megawatt hour over four years to \$33.05/megawatt hour. NYSRECA notes that NYPA's Plan also includes a change in the rate-setting method that has been in place for decades and is set forth in NYPA's power supply contracts. The increased costs would be passed on to NYSRECA's cooperative members, whose residents and businesses are already struggling with affordability.

Governor Hochul has stressed the importance of energy affordability during the State's transition to a clean energy future. As the Governor said on February 15, 2024, “Energy affordability continues to be a top priority in my clean energy agenda.” NYPA's plan to increase the rates it charges NYSRECA's members marks a sharp departure from the goal of affordability and hinders NYSRECA members' ability to contribute to NYPA's mission in the clean energy transition.

NYSRECA members represent NY's non-profit rural electric cooperatives that have supported New York's large scale renewable hydropower resources for decades. As a group overall, NYSRECA's members supply about 87% clean renewable energy from NYPA to its members/consumers, far exceeding the State's climate law requirements. NYSRECA members' purchases of hydropower from the Niagara Power Project are provided by the federal Niagara Redevelopment Act which states that the hydropower be sold at the “lowest rates reasonably possible” to eligible buyers, including NYSRECA's members.

ABOUT NYSRECA

NYSRECA members are four small non-profit electric distribution cooperatives serving retail members in some of the most rural low-density areas in New York State. NYSRECA was formed to help advance the interests of the members of rural electric cooperatives and to advocate for adequate, reliable, and reasonably-priced electric power supply.

Apply For a Trip of a Lifetime



What is Youth Tour?

Steuben Rural Electric Cooperative (SREC) is taking applications for the annual Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. This year, SREC will be in D.C. from April 27-30, 2025. Student delegates will tour monuments, visit museums, meet with elected officials, learn about the cooperative business model, and make new friends.

How to Apply:

- » Applicants must be a junior in high school.
- » Be a son/daughter of a member of SREC.
- » Have at least a "B" average or better.
- » Participate in extra-curricular activities and/or community service.
- » The deadline to apply is March 18, 2025.

The best part? It's FREE! Everything is covered by Steuben Rural Electric Cooperative. It truly is a trip of a lifetime.

TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS

Never make a utility bill payment to anyone calling you on the phone, coming to your door (unless that is a verified bill payment method used by your utility company), texting you or emailing you. Always call your utility company at the number provided on your bill or on the utility's website if you have a question about payment or billing information. Know your utility bill payment options—online, by phone, automatic bank draft, mail or in person.

Source: Utilities United Against Scams

SREC PAYMENT OPTIONS

SREC OFFERS several ways to pay your bill, giving you the opportunity to choose the one that works best for you!

AVAILABLE PAYMENT OPTIONS

- Online payments via Smarhub
- Secure Pay-by-Phone IVR System
- Automatic Payment Plan
- By Mail
- Pay in Person
- Drop Box
- Budget (Levelized) Billing

PAYMENTS OPTIONS THAT ARE NOT AVAILABLE

- Gift Cards
- Venmo
- Zelle
- Credit Card Numbers over the phone with representative

ALSO KNOW THAT WE NEVER CONTACT MEMBERS to make a payment over the phone.



Levelized Billing

Even out your monthly electric payments



*Simplify your life.
Pay online safely
and securely.*

THE TRADING POST

- FOR SALE: Grass-fed all natural ground beef. No fat added, no hormones, organically grown Black Angus Beef. Call 585-991-9173 or 585-728-5243.
- FOR SALE: Power angle snow plow with 4-wheel drive - \$600.00. Call 607-583-4698.
- FOR SALE: 2021 CFMoto CForce400s, like new condition, 114 easy miles, stored inside. Asking \$3900.00. Call 585-622-0348.

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Maintaining Reliability Amid Rising Costs

Despite these financial pressures, Steuben Rural Electric Cooperative remains committed to our mission of providing reliable and affordable electric service to our members. Over the several years, we've made significant investments to rebuild large portions of electric distribution system, replace aging poles, wire and other infrastructure. However, these cost increases mean we must adapt and prioritize our projects even more strategically.

One area where we've been proactive is securing external funding to alleviate the burden on our members. We have pursued opportunities and been successful in obtaining commitments for nearly ten million dollars through FEMA and the Department of Energy to bolster our infrastructure, which is critical for maintaining reliable service. This funding is critical in keeping members rates stable.

What This Means for Members

While we're working diligently to control costs, these industry-wide price increases may ultimately affect cooperative finances. Steuben Rural Electric Cooperative remains committed to transparency and will continue to communicate openly about the challenges we face and the steps we're taking to address them. Our goal is to minimize the financial impact on our members while ensuring the safety, reliability, and sustainability of our system.

Looking Ahead

The rising cost of materials underscores the importance of continued collaboration and advocacy. We will work closely with regional and national partners to push for policies and programs that help mitigate these costs. At the same time, we will maintain our aggressive focus on securing external funding and optimizing our operations to meet these challenges head-on.

Third Party Notification: In accordance with the provisions of the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations, Steuben Rural Electric Cooperative is required to permit a residential member to designate, in writing a third party to receive a copy of every notice of disconnectinane of service to the member, provided that such third party indicated in writing a willingness to receive these notices, please contact the main office at (607) 776-4161 for a copy of the applicable paperwork.

The Trading Post Rules: Only members of SREC may submit ads. Ads must be submitted by the 26th of April in order to be published in the May newsletter. You can submit ads by mailing them to Steuben Rural Electric Cooperative, 9 Wilson Ave, Bath, NY 14810 or by email to keleveland@steubenrec.com. All ads must be typed or printed clearly. Include your name and account number on all submissions. Ads are not allowed to be automatically repeated. They must be resubmitted for each issue. The cooperative reserves the right to edit material for content and/or space as necessary. Ads are published on a first-received basis with no guarantee your ad will appear.

Disclaimer: Items in the Trading Post are published at the request of our members. SREC does not endorse, recommend or assume any responsibility for the products advertised.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- District 1 - James McCormick
- District 2 - Janice Hoad
- District 3 - Edward Borkowski
- District 4 - Walter Longwell
- District 5 - Gerald Chase Jr.
- District 6 - Gordon Foster
- District 7 - Robert Nichols
- District 8 - Randy Stankey
- District 9 - William Moss III

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

- February 17 - Presidents' Day
- April 18 - Good Friday
- May 26 - Memorial Day
- July 4 - Independence Day
- September 1 - Labor Day
- October 13 - Columbus Day
- November 11 - Veterans Day
- November 27 - Thanksgiving
- November 28 - Thanksgiving
- December 24 - Christmas Eve
- December 25 - Christmas Day



\$10 IS HIDING IN THIS ISSUE

Each month, we hide five account numbers within the text of the newsletter. If you find your account number, contact the Cooperative by the end of the current month at 607-776-4161 to receive a \$10 credit on your electric bill.



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