



63rd Annual Conference on Rural Energy Issues

Conference Agenda: Radisson Hotel, La Crosse WI

Thursday February 12, 2026

7:00 am Registration in Hotel Foyer, Breakfast Buffet in the Wisconsin Room

General Session in the Hotel Ballroom

8:30 Welcome and Conference Overview. *Nick Smith*, MREC President

8:45 New Frontiers in the World of Stray Voltage: "Discovering" Lightning 100 Years Too Late - *John Loud and Ben Cotts*, Exponent

9:45-10:00 Break (Refreshments in Hotel Foyer)

10:00 Powering Progress: Balancing Load Growth and Generation – *Jeremy Woeste*, Basin Electric Power Cooperative

11:00 Nuclear Energy in a Shifting Energy Landscape - *Paul Wilson*, UW-Madison

12:00 Lunch in The Wisconsin Room

1:00-5:15 pm Breakout Sessions: Each one-hour presentation is given twice.

Location	1:00 pm	2:00 pm
Hotel Ballroom Wiring track	Transients: How to Measure, Trace the Source(s), and Evaluate their Effects - <i>John Loud and Ben Cotts</i> , Exponent	Transients: How to Measure, Trace the Source(s), and Evaluate their Effects - <i>John Loud and Ben Cotts</i> , Exponent
Iowa Room (2 nd floor) Renewable track	From Simplicity to Sophistication: A Look at Residential Rate Design - <i>Jason Strong</i> , National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation	Utility-Scale Solar: Challenges and Opportunities – <i>Beth Esser, Stanley Minnick</i> , OneEnergy
Illinois Room (2 nd floor) Wiring track	Stray voltage real life testing findings <i>Alex Geiser & Jason Zilisch</i> , WPS	Stray voltage Investigation, <i>Anthony Cook</i> , AC Electrical Testing
Minnesota Room (2 nd floor) Renewable track	Solar and Battery Backup systems - <i>Jesse Michalski</i> , Eland Electric	Virtual Power Plant Function and Economics - <i>Richard Polich</i> , GDS Associates

3:00-3:15 Break (Refreshments in Hotel Foyer)

Location	3:15 pm	4:15 pm
Hotel Ballroom Wiring track	Power Quality, <i>Chris Mullins</i> , PMI (online)	Power Quality, <i>Chris Mullins</i> , PMI (online)
Iowa Room (2 nd floor) Renewable track	Utility-Scale Solar: Challenges and Opportunities - <i>Beth Esser, Stanley Minnick</i> , OneEnergy	From Simplicity to Sophistication: A Look at Residential Rate Design - <i>Jason Strong</i> , National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation
Illinois Room (2 nd floor) Wiring track	Stray voltage Investigation, <i>Anthony Cook</i> , AC Electrical Testing	Stray voltage real life testing findings <i>Alex Geiser & Jason Zilisch</i> , WPS
Minnesota Room (2 nd floor) Renewable track	Virtual Power Plant Function and Economics - <i>Richard Polich</i> , GDS Associates	Solar and Battery Backup systems - <i>Jesse Michalski</i> , Eland Electric

5:30 pm – 7:30 pm Dinner Buffet and Awards Ceremony, Hotel Ballroom



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8:30 Updates from MREC (all invited), *Patrick Soukup*, MREC Vice-President

8:45 ATC transmission projects: from planning to implementation, *Greg Levesque*, ATC

9:45-10:00 am Break (*Refreshments in Hotel Foyer*)

10:00 Re-imagining Dairy Sustainability with RuFaS & AI, *Victor Cabrera*, UW-Madison

11:00 Applied Ethics, *Thom Thibodeau*, Viterbo University

12:00 Adjourn