



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

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

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

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



63rd Annual Conference on Rural Energy Issues

Conference Agenda: Radisson Hotel, La Crosse WI

Friday February 13, 2026

7:00 am Breakfast Buffet in the Wisconsin Room

General Session in the Hotel Ballroom

- 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