

Don Douglas

dondougla@gmail.com

802-439-5364

My name is Don Douglas and I have been our Co-Op's treasurer and a board director since 2000 and I ask for your vote to continue this work on your behalf for the next three years as our coop continues on an exciting transformative journey.

WEC will be installing modern meters at our members' homes and businesses in 2026 and 2027 which will allow us to offer more options such as time of use rates, as well as providing as much information as quickly as possible to our line crews during outages, improving their response time. Best of all, this expensive project will largely be paid through grant money, meaning WEC members likely won't have to borrow money to pay for it. WEC will also be installing a 5kW battery, likely at one of the sub stations, to try and "shave" our peak power use and save on transmission charges which make up more and more of our bills.

This past year our Co-Op-owned landfill gas to energy plant up at Coventry broke a 20 record and produced 57,000,000 kWh which is about 75% of our members' electric needs with close to home, low carbon, 24/7 renewable energy.

I am proud to have been on the board two decades ago when we went to the members to ask them to support a loan to build the plant that has been providing baseload power at less than 6 cents/kWh. That set WEC on the path to be one of the first utilities in the state of Vermont (and still one of only three) to provide 100% Renewable Power for all of our Members. It has also allowed the board to keep electric rate growth below the rate of inflation.

WEC serves the most rural , and therefore most costly, territory in Vermont and one of the most rural in the northeast. We do not expect to have a rate increase in 2026 and I am hopeful we can wait until 2028, even as many other Vermont utilities are seeking increases. WEC also has long term contracts for hydro power with the New York Power Authority and with Hydro-Quebec, and with the Sheffield wind power project, as well as our ownership of the small Wrightsville Hydroelectric project.

This March I will be ending my term as the Vermont Representative to the National Rural Electrical Cooperative Association, or NRECA. It has been an honor to represent the state on the national level and I have served on two committees. The first oversees what we call "The International", which does some of the same work the Rural

Electrification Administration did in the United States, but for foreign countries. It brings line workers to small villages in Guatemala or Bolivia to bring electricity for the first time. Then NRECA staff helped organize folks into coops. My second committee was Finance and Insurance which helps provide health insurance and retirement benefits for more than 66,000 coop employees and which manages over \$32 billion.

WEC maintains 1350 miles of line on a territory of about 2500 square miles. We have to be agile and creative to manage this much on a tight budget in a challenging and sometimes an unforgiving environment. Mother Nature may seem docile at times, but we know that she also appears to be very angry with us right now, as shown by increasing storm damage and costs. WEC, like all the utilities in the state, is replacing its poles and wires with stronger and newer ones, so they don't break as easily when trees fall on them. But we do live in a forest, and trees will fall when the wind blows, especially when 40 percent of our lines are off-road.

Call me with questions or concerns. Remember, it's your Coop, You Own It!