As the CEO and general manager of DEMCO, it is my job to lead by example. One of our core values is to earn and preserve the trust of our membership through transparent business and operational practices.

In January 2021, I began writing an email to the membership to provide information about the co-op directly from me to you. In August, I shared information about the high cost per kilowatt-hour of electricity for the next couple of months. Even though DEMCO's distribution costs are virtually the same from month to month, the cost per kWh has increased solely due to power generation decisions made by our major wholesale power supplier, CLECO Power. Wholesale power—which is 60% to 65% of your electric bill—is a cost that fluctuates each month and is passed through to our members from CLECO Power.

Though we do not have control over CLECO's operational decisions, know that DEMCO is well into negotiations for a new wholesale power contract, which will take effect in early 2024. A new power supply contract and wholesale power portfolio will give DEMCO the flexibility and competitive pricing to provide service to members at the lowest cost possible.

I know high energy bills can impact your overall budget, and the effects can be overwhelming. Many members may not realize this, but in 1997 DEMCO established the DEMCO Foundation nonprofit charitable organization to help members in times of need. Funded through the Operation Roundup program, DEMCO members are eligible to apply for funding up to $2,500 per calendar year. Although funds may not be used to pay your electric bill, funds may be allocated to support expenses such as rent or mortgage assistance, repairs and maintenance on your home, pharmacy and medical supplies, and school uniforms. To learn more or apply for assistance, visit www.DEMCO.org/community/DEMCO-Foundation or call 225-262-2141.

In this issue, learn about peak energy demand times and energy-saving tips to help lower use and reduce your bill. Also, if you have been a DEMCO member for twelve months or more, you may enroll in levelized billing to help you avoid seasonal spikes in your bill. Stories on page 5.

If you live in a manufactured home, learn how to perform an energy-efficiency checkup to help you improve comfort and, most importantly, save you money on your electric bill. All homeowners can benefit from many of the tips provided. Story on page 17.

I'm proud to report DEMCO passed the inspection performed by Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program auditors in July 2021. Safety is a core value that guides how we work every day. Story on page 20.

I encourage you to take time to read page 21, to learn more about key factors that influence the price of electricity. Although DEMCO rates have not changed, other elements do impact your bill.