

# Co-op Connections® Card Program Overview

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## **Q: What is the Co-op Connections® Card program?**

This program is unique to Touchstone Energy Cooperatives. The program is entirely free to co-op members with no strings attached. It's our way of saying thank you for being a co-op member and extending valuable discounts at participating businesses.

This program will connect our members with discounts at participating local and national businesses. Members will also receive discounts on prescription drugs at participating pharmacies as well, which have proven to be the most successful part of the program. Nationally, co-op members have saved \$31.3 million on prescriptions since June 2, 2011.

## **Q: Why is Lake Country Power doing the program?**

The cooperative's commitment to members goes beyond its mission to balance rates with safety, reliability, service quality and the financial strength of the cooperative. We're always looking for ways to provide value to members and the communities we serve, especially during tough economic times. The Co-op Connections program has been proven successful and valuable to members at hundreds of other cooperatives across the nation. We're excited to roll out this program locally to our members.

Lake Country Power's Co-op Connections® Card provides members with a real money-saving tool. The Co-op Connections® Card program is a direct membership benefit of belonging to a Touchstone Energy Cooperative.

## **Q: What are the objectives of the program?**

- Help members save money at local business establishments through a Co-op Connections Card and Key Fobs that all members will receive from Lake Country Power.
- Card carriers are identified as cooperative members. They are not just a "customer," but rather have membership with Lake Country Power.
- We value and care about our Lake Country Power members. We want to give something of value directly back into the hands of members through our administration of the Co-op Connections program.
- Seek business partnerships and discounts that will benefit member-consumers as they shop various stores, eat at various restaurants and purchase their prescriptions.
- Provide a tool to help increase traffic and sales locally throughout northern Minnesota.

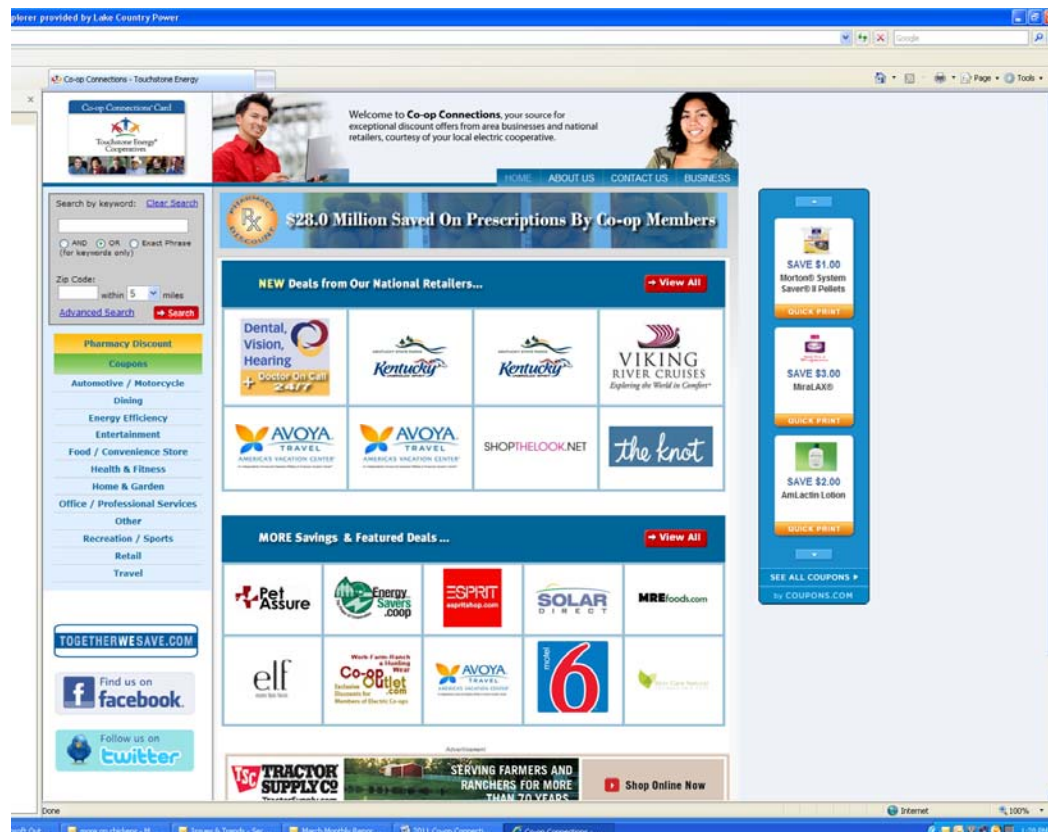
**Q: When and how will members receive their cards?**

The plan is to stagger the mailing of cards starting May 9, 2011 over the course of six consecutive weeks. The card and key fob combo will be mailed to members and the envelope will identify the information inside. In addition to the card/key fobs, a letter explaining the program along with a Q&A on pharmacy discounts will be included.

Mailing Dates:	Districts to be mailed
May 9 or 10	District 6 (4,831 addresses)
May 16 or 17	District 4 (4,500)
May 23 or 24	District 3 and 5 (9,425)
May 31	District 7 (4,625)
June 6 or 7	District 8 and 9 (9,138)
June 13 or 14	District 1 and 2 (9,880)

**Q: How do members know which businesses are participating?**

We will provide a link on Lake Country Power’s website to [www.connections.coop](http://www.connections.coop) where members can find business participants. All they have to do is type their zip code in the white blank box on the left side of the website to narrow the search to businesses in the area. They can also view national listings on this site as well. Or, they can do the “Advanced Search” for Lake Country Power. URL address: <http://www.connections.coop/searchResults.php>.



The card also provides access to online savings at more than 90 national retailers like Barnes&Noble.com, Hertz Rental Cards and Best Western hotels.

**Q: What if a local business calls and wants to participate in the program by offering a discount to members?**

Contact Tami Zaun, Jeff Sheldon or Leo Wilenius at 800-421-9959. They will gather the contact information from the business and work out the details. There is no cost for businesses to participate in the program.

Businesses can enroll in the program at any time. We expect to enroll new businesses periodically over the next few years. The contract is free and is a one-year agreement with each business.

**Q: What about the pharmacy discount?**

One of the most valuable features of the Co-op Connections® Card is the pharmacy discount. Although the card/key fobs **cannot be used in conjunction with insurance and are not intended as a substitute for insurance**, members may use their card or key fob to purchase prescriptions not covered by their insurance plans at a discounted rate. Most local pharmacies may want to participate in the connections program, although some may not.

The pharmacy discount may deliver savings of 10 – 60 percent on prescription drugs. The exact percentage will be the choice of the individual pharmacy. The information on the back of the cards will be recognized at more than 60,000 national, regional and local pharmacies. Once members receive their card/key fob combo, they'll be able to find participating pharmacy locations at [www.locateproviders.com](http://www.locateproviders.com) using the numbers on the back of the card.

The pharmacy discount has been widely used by co-ops that are members of Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives. If members are declined their discount at a national pharmacy, they should report their experience to Lake Country Power, including their name, date of service, prescription number/name of drug and whether member wants reimbursement.

**Q: How much did this program cost Lake Country Power? Is it included in my rates?**

The overall cost is about \$1.17 per member, but the potential value, or savings for each member who uses the card, is much, much greater. We budgeted last year to offer the program and the board approved because they believe in the value it will bring to members.

**Q: Is there any hidden benefit to Lake Country Power?**

No, there are no benefits to Lake Country Power other than the satisfaction knowing that we are helping you save money on your purchases. We believe in the power of membership in a

co-op and that's the reason we're offering the Co-op Connections Card program so members like you can take advantage of the discounts offered at participating businesses.

**Q: Regarding new members. How will they receive the cards if they're not included in the original mailing from CFS?**

Lake Country Power's Call Center will include the card/letter in membership packets they already send by mail.