

Spotlight

March 2024



ENERGY ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

West CAP provides Energy Assistance for Barron, Chippewa, Dunn, Pepin, Pierce, & St. Croix Counties

As the heating season comes to an end, we'd like to remind everyone of the services available for help with your energy bill, should the need arise.

Established in 1965, West CAP is one of over 16 Community Action agencies in Wisconsin, and one of over 1,000 across the country, working to end poverty. The West CAP team of nearly 70 staff strives to provide resources that promote the self-sufficiency of low-income families in the rural communities of west central Wisconsin and by working to create a more just and sustainable society.

Resources Available Through WestCAP

The Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) provides assistance for heating costs, electric costs, and energy crisis situations. Operating with federal and state funding, the program provides assistance to households across our service area to help lower the burden of monthly energy costs.

WHEAP assistance is a one-time payment during the heating season (October 1-May 15). The funding pays a portion of energy costs, and the payment is not intended to cover the entire annual energy costs of a residence. The amount of the energy assistance payment varies depending on a variety of factors, including the household's size, income, and energy costs.

Crisis Assistance

Crisis assistance may be available if you have no heat, are nearly out of fuel, or your electricity has been or will soon be shut off.

Furnace Assistance

The Home Energy Plus (HE+) Furnace Program provides services to eligible homeowners and some renters when their heating system stops operating or is operating in an unsafe manner. HE+ Furnace Program assistance can include repairs, or in some situations, a total replacement of an inoperable system. Call West CAP immediately if you are experiencing a no-heat situation.

For more information on all of their programs, please call West CAP at 715-265-4271. You can also visit their website for an application at <https://westcap.org/services/energy-assistance>.

CUT YOUR ENERGY COSTS

1

★ SET YOUR THERMOSTAT TO 68 DEGREES OR LOWER DURING THE HEATING SEASON. AVOID SPACE HEATERS

★ KEEP THE HEAT! ADD WINDOW COVERINGS TO HOLD IN YOUR WARM AIR

2

3

★ ADD AN EXTRA LAYER OF WARM CLOTHING, A BLANKET - OR EVEN BETTER, A LAP DOG!

★ LOCK YOUR WINDOWS. IF BURGLERS CAN'T GET IN, NEITHER CAN THE COLD AIR!

4

FOR MORE TIPS VISIT US AT DUNNENERGY.COM



CAN YOU DIG IT? CALL 8-1-1 TO FIND OUT

As I sit down to write this, it's early February and the weather is making me think spring! The weather has me planning my garden and a possible fencing project. As we know, spring showers bring May flowers but digging on your own this spring could spell big trouble. Even if you think you could get lucky or that digging one small hole (or two) won't matter, don't take for granted what lines might lurk beneath the soil in your yard.

Before you use that post hole digger or other unearthing tools, STOP and call 8-1-1 to request that the electric, gas, fiber and other live lines in or near your yard be marked. The service is free but digging in an unmarked yard may not be.

You might think you don't have time for that and ask yourself, what's the worst that could happen?

Well, you could die or become seriously injured. Or, if you have someone helping you, they could be seriously hurt or killed.

"People think they don't have the time to call, or they think hitting an underground line won't happen to them, but it can happen and it does," says Jesse Singerhouse, Dunn Energy Cooperative CEO. "It only takes a three day advance notice when you call to have your yard marked and the wait is well worth it," Singerhouse continues. "The consequences of hitting a line can range from interrupting your favorite television show to a gas leak to electrocution."

Other consequences of blindly digging? You could cause a power outage. You could hit a gas line and get burned or cause an evacuation in your neighborhood. You could be fined. If you hit a telephone line or fiber optic line, you might

lose your telephone, cable TV or internet service. Worse yet, it could interfere with your neighborhood's emergency assistance technology. And you may have to pay to have it repaired.

Although it all seems like "your" yard, utilities have the right-of-way and live lines are lurking under the ground. Take a deep breath, look over your landscaping or fence plans, and call 8-1-1 before you dig. Each state has its own call center to help you get digging safely, but 8-1-1 is the one-call-fits-all in the U.S. Once you call Diggers Hotline utilities or the companies they contract will come to your home and mark your yard before you dig. If you have personal lines that need to be located, you will have to hire an underground locating contractor.

You can call in your locate with 811 or submit it online at diggershotline.com. Call before you dig. It's the law!

FROM THE BOARD ROOM

January 2024 Board Meeting Highlights



Monthly Reports:

The Operations report included updates on the two projects near Connorsville and County Highway H, as well as an overview on progress from our vegetation management contractor, Zielies Tree Service. They

have started the 2024 brushing rotation near the Colfax and Wheeler substations.

The Member Engagement report contained updates on Operation Round Up. It was noted that since the inception of the program at Dunn Energy Cooperative in 2008, almost \$500,000 has been given back to local not-for-profit organizations in the communities we serve. Progress on the Annual Meeting was discussed, as was the billing statement redesign and more.

The CFO discussed 2023 year-end numbers. Due to the mild weather, December was not high in sales, as is normally the case. Sales were 4% below budget. Total kWh sales for the year were within 0.09% of budget.

The CEO/General Manager gave updates on grants, upcoming meetings, strategic planning and more. A discussion took place regarding rates for larger accounts as well as the the RUS loan application. An educational podcast regarding AI and what it means for electric cooperatives was also discussed.

The following items were approved:

- Minutes of the December 2023 Board meeting.
- Capital credit estate payout for deceased members.
- Audit committee report of all checks, ACH payments, wire transfers, credit card statements, and investments accounts.
- Policy 214 change to Schedules G and G1

Other Business:

Director Zwiefelhofer reported on Dairyland Power activities for the month.

Reviewed the monthly report of new Cooperative members.

Reviewed the monthly educational piece, "What the AI Revolution Means for Electric Cooperatives."