



SERVING YOUR COOPERATIVE AND THE COMMUNITY

By Jesse Singerhouse, General Manager

For several years now, Dunn Energy Cooperative has operated our Operation Round Up (ORU) program. Members participating in ORU have their electric bill rounded up to the next whole dollar amount. So if your bill was \$156.25 it would be rounded up to \$157. The \$0.75 cents would be added to the ORU account to be spent on deserving not-for-profit projects within our community. The average member contributes \$6 per year to ORU and monthly contributions can range from a penny to \$.99, depending on your electric bill each month. One of the founding principles of your electric co-op is neighbors helping neighbors. Our cooperative is in touch with the communities we serve. Our members, directors, and employees live in these communities. That's why we work hard to achieve a better quality of life for our member-owners.

This program, while simple in nature, has had a tremendous impact on the communities we serve. We have about 7,200 out of our 10,400 accounts participating in ORU. At an average of \$6 per account, just by working together our members can generate over \$40,000 to invest in our communities. The cooperative does all the administrative work to make the program successful at no cost, meaning all the money created by the ORU program is spent directly on local projects.

There have been many things you, our members, have helped with in our community through the Operation Round Up program. Together we've helped purchase new books for the library in Colfax, helped fund a strong bodies training for senior citizens, we partnered with a local snowmobile club to install new lights for a local 4H club softball field, helped with the funding for a new playground equipment in Ridgeland, and developed hygiene kits for students that were in need in a local school. We also partnered with several local agencies to update equipment and services for first responders and law enforcement in our area, including Colfax Fire & Rescue, Wheaton Fire & Rescue, Spring Valley Fire Department, Durand Fire Relief Association, Pepin County Sheriff's Department, Menomonie Police and Fire Departments, and the Dunn County Sheriff's office. All of these agencies are

working hard to protect and serve our members. By supporting equipment purchases we can invest in helping them do their job even better.

So how can you, as a member-owner, help to make our Operation Round Up program even stronger? First, please consider participating if you don't. The more members we can add to the ORU program will increase the funding available for projects in our communities. Your spare change can go a long way. When you look at your monthly bill there will be

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an Operation Round Up line in your current billing detail. If you are not participating and would like to, just call the office and they will get it set up. (12510001)

Second, you can promote the program to groups that you work with in our communities. There is an online application located on our website. Just go to dunnenergy.com/operation-round

and you'll find the grant application and more information about the program.

Finally, ORU is a member-driven program. Dunn Energy staff administer the program, but all decisions about where to invest our resources are made by a board of our members. This is different from our regular board of directors. Members volunteer to be on our ORU board. They meet four times per year to decide what grant requests to fund. The meeting usually takes place over lunch and could be done remotely if necessary. We try to get board members from around our service territory to make sure all our communities are represented. We especially need a volunteer board member from our southern communities like the Rock Falls/Durand area as well as in the Wheaton/Elk Mound/Tilden (Chippewa County) part of our service territory.

If you are interested in participating and doing some good work for our community, please call the office or send an email to info@dunnenergy.com

Our Operation Round Up program has been very successful because of strong participation by our members and from the guidance of our ORU board. I believe this program is a great example of why cooperatives are truly different. We are making a difference in our community by working together.

Working for You

GEARING UP FOR SUMMER CONSTRUCTION

With summer, hopefully, right around the corner I'm sure many of you are getting prepared to start some warm-weather projects. The same is happening here at the cooperative. If you're traveling through the eastern side of our territory, you'll notice us working along County Highway T in Chippewa County. The work in that area is to upgrade facilities to feed the new Country Jam location and plan for future load growth in that area.

Crews will also be working along County Road H north of State Highway 29 north of Elk Mound this summer as well. This is a planned upgrade to help better serve the growing loads in the area. Brushing crews are working in the Caryville, Rock Falls, and Connorsville areas this year, and our contractor, Osmose, will be testing poles in the Eau Galle and Knapp areas.

Crews will also continue to do their regular line maintenance and installation of new services.

If you are planning on installing a new electrical service this year, there are some things you should keep in mind. If your electrical load will be larger than normal (i.e., adding an EV charger, grain bins, irrigation, or electric motors), please get in touch with us early on. The lead time on getting some of the equipment necessary for larger loads is quite

long. The supply-chain issues that every industry is currently experiencing is affecting the electric industry as well. The sooner we get a plan in place, the better the chance for us to meet your needs in a timely manner.

In regard to other electrical installations, if you are planning to install a solar array on your property with the notion of interconnecting to use the cooperative as your assurance for power in times you might not be generating enough, like a battery back-up, here are some basic things you should know:

- Make sure to contact the cooperative before you start. We have size-to-load requirements that need to be met for systems that are interconnected with our facilities.
- A distributed generation application needs to be filled out and fee paid before the start of your project.
- Utilize a local contractor. We've dealt with many members who have used out-of-state contractors who had a poor installation experience.

Whether you're building a house, putting up solar panels, or planting trees, remember to make sure you file a locate with Diggers Hotline. You can either call 811 or visit them online at diggershotline.com. It's the law.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

UW-Stout | July 11-13, 2023



Take the opportunity to...

- See what makes the cooperative business model successful
- Identify and learn how to develop your own leadership skills.
- Discuss cooperative careers with industry professionals.
- Be entertained and challenged by motivational speakers

Who should apply?

- High school juniors whose parents/guardians are members of Dunn Energy Cooperative
- Students wanting to explore different career opportunities
- Students who are interested in expanding their leadership skills

What does it cost?

All registration costs are covered by your local cooperative.

Deadline for registration is June 7, 2023

This is a conference by teens, for teens. For more information and how to apply, visit dunnenergy.com



PLAN AHEAD TO DIG SAFELY

With March comes the first days of spring; days are getting longer and we're all a little stir crazy from the long, cold, and snowy winter. Spring brings the milder temperatures that give folks the urge to get outside (wait until Mother's Day for planting those tender plants!) and start their outdoor projects.

Before you pick up your shovel for your next outdoor project though, you need to take some precautions to keep you and others safe. Although your plans may seem small, the impact of making contact with an underground utility line could be huge, potentially even lethal. (140021179)

Call 811 at least three business days

before your planned digging date. Once you have reported where you plan to dig and what type of work you will complete, the area will be surveyed, and public utilities will be marked within three business days. This service is free of charge.

In 2022 alone, over 350 members of Dunn Energy Cooperative were out of power due to dig-ins. A dig-in can cause a short, a shock, and oftentimes an outage. If you're lucky your equipment will protect you from injury. Most often this happens because someone hasn't called Diggers' Hotline for a locate of underground wires or isn't following the instructions to hand-dig within 18-inches of the located path.

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Locators through Digger's Hotline will not locate private underground facilities like propane lines, secondary electrical lines you've had installed to outbuildings, or invisible fences. You can find a list of locators on the Digger's Hotline website who can help you with locating your private lines.

If you do not know what facilities are on the property, look for clues to tell you what might be under ground, like: a propane storage tank, gas meters, a detached garage or outbuilding with lights, a pool on the property, manhole lids, storm drains, and pavement patches.

Once all marks have been made to indicate the location of underground utilities in the area, respect the boundaries, and dig carefully. Keep at least 18 inches away from the utility line markings. If you must encroach on those last 18 inches, carefully hand dig.

Remember, calling Digger's Hotline at least three business days before you begin your project (and following the instructions) protects you from physical and monetary damages.

Make Sure to Plan Ahead with Your Spring Projects

Call 811 at least 3 business days before you plan to dig, or file your locate online at diggershotline.com

Wait for your locate to clear

Hand dig within 18-inches of the marked line

Remember, 811 locators do not detect private underground facilities, like:

- sprinklers
- invisible fences
- propane lines
- private electrical lines running to outbuildings

Call 811 before digging



Time for Spring Cleaning

Are your bills a mess? It's time to clean them up by setting up recurring and stored payments through SmartHub. While you're there, check out the other great benefits SmartHub has to offer:

- Communicate directly with the co-op
- Sign up for paperless billing
- Report outages
- Manage your account
- Pay your bill online
- Check your usage



View & Pay Bill

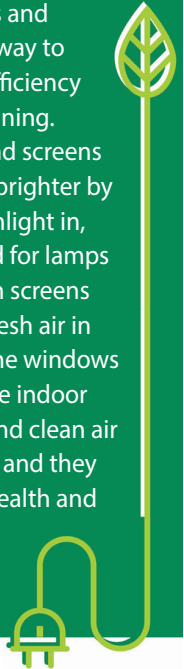
Clean up your bills by signing up for SmartHub online. It's Dunn Energy Cooperative's FREE and mobile online payment system. Click on the signup link and follow the prompts to create your user name and password.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Washing windows and screens is a great way to practice energy efficiency during spring cleaning. Clean windows and screens make your home brighter by allowing more sunlight in, reducing the need for lamps and fixtures. Clean screens also allow more fresh air in the home when the windows are open to recycle indoor air. Natural light and clean air are energy savers, and they enhance overall health and productivity.

Source: energy.gov



Hidden Account Numbers

If you find your account number hidden in the pages of this magazine and you call and tell us before the next issue is mailed, we'll put a **\$50 credit** on your electric bill. Happy hunting!

Last month's winners were Jamie Dallman and Tyler Stroo & Karli Helland.

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