



**Dunn Energy Cooperative**  
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

# 2025 A LOOK BACK AT 2024: THE HIGHLIGHTS & CHALLENGES



By Jesse Singerhouse, General Manager

As we turn the calendar to December, we look forward to a joyous holiday season and reflect on our year in 2024. Like in life, some years are better than others, but we are still thankful for the time we had no matter how many bumps in the road. It's not any different for your energy cooperative. We had some highlights and challenges this past year, but we are always thankful for another year to serve our members.

## 2024 Cooperative Highlights

- Worked with a commitment to safety each and every day. We achieved our safety accreditation as well.
- Energized 3 megawatts of locally produced utility scale solar energy, with another 2.5 megawatts planned for 2025.
- Successfully earned grants, including a WI Grid resiliency grant to aid the development of our future smart grid, a Powering Affordable Clean Energy (PACE) grant that will make our future solar project more cost competitive with traditional sources of energy, and a Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) grant that will help defer some costs of energy efficient lighting for our headquarters.
- Scored an 84 in the American Customer (member) Satisfaction Index survey, ranking Dunn Energy in the top 25% of all cooperatives.
- Started a new member education program called The Power Connection: Conversations with Your Cooperative.

## 2024 Cooperative Challenges

- Lower than budgeted energy sales due to mild temperatures, adequate moisture, and the (hopefully temporary) loss of a larger load on our system.
- Inflationary price increases on wire, transformers,

meters, and almost all other materials.

- Long lead times for many of the products we use to keep your power reliable.
- Cost increases from our power supplier leading to upward pressure on rates.
- Slower growth in terms of the number of new members building in our territory.

We accomplished many great things in 2024 and kept the power on over 99% of the time, all while keeping your cooperative financially healthy for both the long and short term. Yes, there are challenges, and as we look ahead to 2025, we will begin to see upward pressure on rates due to many of the factors listed above. A rate increase will most likely be needed sometime in early 2025. We will also have to keep a keen eye on any State or Federal policy decisions that might impact grid reliability and our cooperative. (868005)

On behalf of the employees and board members of Dunn Energy Cooperative, thank you for the opportunity to serve you this past year. We look forward to safely keeping your energy reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible in the year ahead.

## CORRECTION

It was incorrectly stated in the November issue of the *WECN* that all three director positions up for election at the 2025 Annual Meeting are open due to directors having met their term limits. Only two directors, from District 2 and District 5, have met their term limits. District three director, Jeff Gasteyer, is up for reelection. Dunn Energy Cooperative regrets the error.



## RURAL ELECTRIC CO-OPS FORM PARTNERSHIP TO DEVELOP 62 MW OF SOLAR ENERGY ACROSS WISCONSIN

**F**ifteen area electric cooperatives are working together to get the best volume pricing on solar energy for their members. They have formed a partnership with OneEnergy Renewables of Madison to develop and construct 22 utility-scale solar arrays across Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa. Over the next two years, the partnership will add 62.75 megawatts of new solar generation.

“By working together with other cooperatives around Wisconsin and the upper Midwest we can achieve some economies of scale to help lower the cost of the local renewable energy that will benefit all our members,” said Dunn Energy Cooperative CEO Jesse Singerhouse. “Dunn Energy’s new array will generate an additional 2.5 megawatts of locally produced energy.”

Construction is set to begin in each co-op community in 2025 and go through 2026. Each array will be developed on property leased from local landowners, with panels that operate on a tracking system to follow the path of the sun for maximum power generation. Each co-op will purchase solar energy from the arrays at a fixed rate over the long term.

Dunn Energy will partner with OneEnergy Renewables to develop another utility-scale solar project in our local service area. This will be the fourth utility-scale solar installation for your cooperative. Dunn Energy also worked with OneEnergy to develop SunDEC 2 and 3. They were energized in December 2023. (140020884)

SunDEC 4 will be connected to the Elk Mound Substation, which is located on Highway 29 east of Menomonie. The 15-acre site will have 5,200 panels. The 2.5 MW solar array will generate about 5,261,400 kWh of electricity annually, enough to power 635 homes.

“We are thrilled to use Cooperative Principle No. 6, Cooperation Among Cooperatives, to help bring the SunDEC 4 solar project to fruition,” said Singerhouse. “This project, just like the previous three we have done, is one component of helping us achieve our vision of being a cooperative that safely delivers energy that is reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible to our members.”

### Restoring native prairie and pollinator habitat

Co-op solar arrays are dual-purpose spaces that provide renewable energy for members, as well as acres of important ecosystems. The ground under all 22 arrays will be restored with pasture, prairie grasses and wildflowers, providing habitat for pollinators and healthy root systems to prevent soil erosion from wind and rain. Some sites will even be grazed by sheep in partnership with local farmers.

### OneEnergy Renewables

OneEnergy Renewables is a leading solar energy company in Wisconsin that offers expertise in site development, engineering, equipment purchasing, construction, and operations. The Madison-based team has developed 31 projects across Wisconsin, and another 11 in adjacent states.

Eric Udelhofen, OneEnergy’s VP of development, said, “We are excited to partner with this group of electric cooperatives to help bring affordable, clean energy to the rural Midwest. We look forward to delivering cost-effective, reliable electricity to serve your local communities.”

Electric co-ops included in the OneEnergy Renewable partnership are:

Almakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative, Postville, IA  
Barron Electric Cooperative, Barron, WI  
Clark Electric Cooperative, Greenwood, WI  
Dunn Energy Cooperative, Menomonie, WI  
Eau Claire Energy Cooperative, Eau Claire, WI  
Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative, Albert Lea, MN  
Heartland Power Cooperative, Thompson, IA  
Jump River Energy Cooperative, Ladysmith, WI  
MiEnergy Cooperative, Rushford, MN/Cresco, IA  
Oakdale Electric Cooperative, Tomah, WI  
People’s Energy Cooperative, Oronoco, MN  
Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative, Centuria, WI  
Riverland Electric Cooperative, Arcadia, WI  
St. Croix Electric Cooperative, Hammond, WI  
Vernon Electric Cooperative, Westby, WI



# OPERATION ROUND UP SURPASSES \$500,000 IN GRANTS IN 2024



Photo top left: Knapp Elementary School students enjoy their new Play-Doh thanks to an Operation Round Up grant.

Photo above: The Food Harvest food pantry in Boyceville is able to purchase extra goods to help those in need.

Since 2008, roughly 77% of the Dunn Energy Cooperative membership have been voluntarily rounding their bill total up to the nearest dollar. On average, a member who participates in the program donates \$6 per meter each year to the program. That extra change is put in the Operation Round Up grant fund. A committee made up of members meets quarterly to review applications and award funds to deserving local organizations.

This year, the total of grants awarded since 2008 has surpassed the half million-dollar mark. This marks a huge milestone for the program. These are all funds that are donated by our members and stay in the communities we serve.

“We are thrilled that Dunn Energy Cooperative’s Operation Round Up program has reached this significant

contribution milestone,” said Dunn Energy Cooperative CEO Jesse Singerhouse. “More importantly we are inspired by the good work we have done in our local community! Our members have invested in improving the communities we serve which is a core part of the mission of our cooperative.”

In the last 16 years, Operation Round Up has helped over 200 individual non-profit organizations in the Dunn Energy Cooperative service territory. These funds help children with food insecurity and volunteer organizations with needed equipment. The reach of this program is great, and it only works because of members like you. Thank you for participating in this program and helping your friends and neighbors help others.

*Working for You*

Operation Round Up has been awarded to over 200 individual organizations, including schools, fire departments, quilting groups, and food pantries.



Above: Sand Creek Fire Department purchased new turnout gear with the help of an Operation Round Up grant. Right: The New Hope Quilters were able to purchase extra batting and other materials to make quilts for local shelters and others in need.

# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

The holiday season is the time when we cherish old traditions and enjoy creating new ones. All of us here at Dunn Energy want to wish you a merry and bright holiday season, and we look forward to serving you and our community in 2025!

Jesse Singerhouse  
Tyrel Blanchfield  
Loren Luzinski  
Pat Rhude  
John Hestekin  
Chris Marlett  
Brian Jiskra  
Josh Millar  
Lee Longmire

Dan Heit  
Mike Frinack  
Landan Romsos  
Logan Scheel  
David Livingston  
Jordan Hessler  
Colin Riley  
Brett Pauly  
Tanner DeMarce

Diane Harschlip  
Heather Boesl  
Becky Weber  
Jolene Fisher  
Becky Gehring  
Dee Fox  
Corrine Fiege  
Allison Zielsdorf

*Have a safe and happy holiday season!*

## 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 Gary Hinrichs and Nathan Behling.

**Jesse Singerhouse, Manager**

N5725 600th St., P.O. Box 220, Menomonie, WI 54751  
715-232-6240  
www.dunnenergy.com

**Jolene Fisher, Editor**



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