Seven Cooperative Principles

Cooperatives around the world operate according to the same set of core principles and values. These principles are a key reason that electric cooperatives operate differently from other electric utilities, putting the needs of their members first.

1. Voluntary and Open Membership: Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political, or religious discrimination.

2. Democratic Member Control: Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. The elected representatives are accountable to the membership.

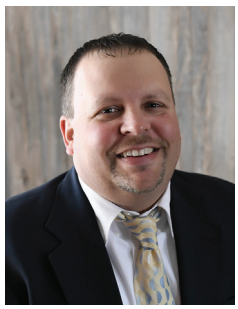
3. Members Economic Participation: Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the cooperative.

4. Autonomy and Independence: Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members.

5. Education, Training, and Information: Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperative. They inform the general public about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives: Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional, and international structures.

7. Concern for Community: While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.



Dunn Energy Cooperative
"Energy Through Excellence"
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

By Jesse Singerhouse, General Manager

As you read this article our nation will have just completed, or will be about to complete, an election day. The day where voters have their say in who represents them from our local town boards all the way to the White House. I wanted to take a deeper look at democratic member control here at Dunn Energy Cooperative.

Cooperative Principle #2

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. Directors are elected by the membership and are accountable to the membership. Members have equal voting rights: one member, one vote.

Dunn Energy Cooperative (DEC) is controlled by the members. Yes, I am hired by the board to run the day-to-day business of the cooperative. But you, our member, get a say in who represents you on the board. We have nine members on the board of directors for DEC. Each one represents a geographic district in our service territory. Board members represent an active electric service within that district, thus making them a Class A member and therefore eligible to serve on the board.

Board members are elected to a three-year term and can only serve a total of 12 consecutive years before term limits kick in. In every election at DEC there are at least two names on the ballot for each district up for election. When a district is up for election, even if there is an incumbent eligible to seek another term, letters are sent out to all members in that district announcing that their seat is up for election at the next annual meeting.

A nominating committee, appointed by the board and made up of one member from each district, will gather names of anyone interested in serving on the board. Those names are brought to a nominating committee meeting, vetted by the committee and legal counsel, and ultimately at least two are placed on a ballot. Ballots are then mailed to all Class A members who have the opportunity to vote for who represents them. The winners of the election are announced at the cooperative annual meeting.

I'm very proud of the process we use here at Dunn Energy. We offer our members a choice of who will represent them on the board and we have term limits that allow for an active and engaged membership. (9862003)

Board members meet monthly to review cooperative financial, operational, and administrative performance. They set policy and represent the interest of the members. They also educate themselves on all aspects of the energy business through director training and partnerships with our state and national trade associations.

(Continued on page 17)

STAY *Safe* THIS HARVEST SEASON

Harvest season often means putting in long hours, which can make it difficult to stay alert and on the lookout for potential hazards. Safe Electricity provides safety tips to help farmers make this harvest season a safe one. Richard McCracken, Safe Electricity Advisory Board member, advises, "Safety starts with preparation. Be prepared for potential emergencies before the rush of harvest season begins. Have a safety plan, and make sure that farm workers and family members are aware of the procedures in it."

Be sure that you can see well in the areas where you are working. Consider adding extra lighting around grain bins and augers.

Take the time to look up and look out for electrical lines. Always be aware of where they are in relation to your equipment. Keep a minimum of 10 feet away from all electrical equipment, and lower extensions before moving equipment. If you see a power line that is sagging or low, contact your utility. Also keep an eye out for guy wires. Although these wires are not energized, they can bring down live lines.

In equipment with auto-guidance systems, less focus is needed on steering, which may lead some drivers to think that they do not need to be as aware of navigation issues. However, even while using a GPS with auto-steering, farm workers need to keep safety in mind and stay focused on their surroundings.

"Slow down, always stay alert, and take all recommended precautions. To help you do so, recognize when you need to take breaks so that you can be active and engaged in the farm work," says McCracken.

Additional electrical safety tips include:

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near lines.
- Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Look up and use care when moving any equipment such as extending augers or raising the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Always set extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads to prevent contact with overhead lines. Grain augers should always be positioned horizontally before being moved.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.

If the machinery you are operating does make contact with a power line, stay on the equipment. Immediately call 911, warn others to stay away, and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.

Only on the rare occasion that the machinery catches fire should you leave the vehicle after contact is made. If this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the ground and machinery at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area. Never touch anything that is in contact with a power line.

"Remember, while harvest is a busy season on the farm, it's still important to take the time to keep safety first and look out for and stay safely away from potential hazards like overhead power lines," adds McCracken.

For more information, visit SafeElectricity.org.

STAYING SAFE AFTER AN ACCIDENT:

Know what to do around utility equipment

With winter right around the corner, now is the time to revisit accident safety with the drivers in your home. Do you all know what you should do if your vehicle comes in contact with a pad-mount transformer (or "green box") or other utility equipment or lines?

First, assess the situation. If your car is not smoking or on fire, stay in your vehicle. That is the safest place for you to be while you wait for help, and the utility to de-energize the power lines. Stepping out of your vehicle while touching it at the same time, or trying to walk or run to safety, can cause serious burn injuries or death.

If you are in a multiple-car accident, yell to others (from the safety of your car) to warn them not to leave their vehicle. Also warn those who might stop to help to not approach the scene. (6640004)

Call 911 to report the accident location and clearly state to the dispatcher that electrical equipment or lines are involved.

If you see smoke or fire, try to stay calm. Make a clear jump, without holding on to the vehicle, and hop or shuffle (with your feet together) at least 30 feet from the vehicle. Just like any downed power lines, any damaged utility equipment such as pad-mounted transformers or cabinets that house electrical equipment can send electrical current through the pavement or ground.

Walking across the energized ground or touching an energized vehicle and the ground at the same time, a phenomenon known as step potential can occur. Step potential is the voltage difference between the two feet of a person near an energized, grounded object. A person on the ground is subjected to the risk of injury during an electrical fault by simply attempting to move away from the grounding point, in this case the car in the accident.

DO NOT go near or touch electrical equipment.

DO NOT move a downed wire or broken piece of equipment with your hand or other object.

Keep in mind that there can still be damage to equipment, even if you don't see anything. Even if metal boxes look intact or appear to have minimal damage, please report the incident to electrical provider. If the impact dislodges the equipment inside the "green box" it is possible the ground could become energized. This makes for a very dangerous situation.

This winter, if you are plowing and accidentally clip a transformer, or any other electrical equipment for that matter, please make sure to report it to your utility. This helps keep everyone safe.

If you are in an accident involving electrical equipment, remember to stay calm, call 911, stay in your vehicle, and warn others to stay away. If your car is on fire, jump clear of the vehicle with both feet together and hop or shuffle at least 30 feet away.

Let's make it a safe winter season here in Wisconsin!

License to Live

To learn more about what to do you if you should ever find yourself in an accident involving power equipment, watch the short video "License to Live," a project sponsored by Wisconsin's electric cooperatives and developed by electric co-op employees and WECA in conjunction with the Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange and Safe Electricity. You can view the view at https://safeelectricity.org/license-to-live/.

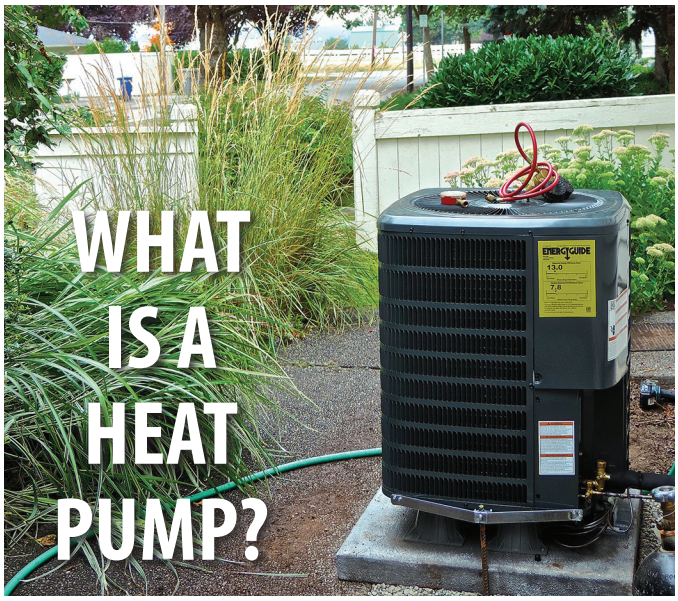
Democratic Member Control

(Continued from page 15)

I have worked for the cooperative for 20 years, so I've had the pleasure of working with two different sets of board members. While they were both unique in their own way, the resounding similarity of all board members I have worked with here at Dunn Energy is that they all care deeply about their communities and the members we serve. That is something that makes cooperatives truly unique.

Another unique aspect of democratic member control is one member one vote. What that means is that the smallest user of electric service and the largest user of electric service ALL have the same power. In some organizations, the more business you do with a provider or the more shares you have, the more votes you get. Not at a democratically controlled cooperative, though. Every active Class A member receives one vote.

As you can see democratic member control is strong at DEC. You, as a member-owner, have a voice in how this cooperative works. As in any democracy, members might not always agree, but we all have an equal voice. Thank you for being an active member of your cooperative.



Maybe you were in the process of buying a home, watching the latest episode of your favorite house-hunting reality show, or just making small talk at the office water cooler when you heard the term "heat pump." Perhaps you then wondered what it is or what it does. Although it has the word heat it its name, it does more than help warm your home.

What are heat pumps and how do they work?

In general, a heat pump extracts heat from one place and transfers it to another (similar to how an air conditioner or refrigerator cools). In warmer months, a heat pump takes heat from inside a home and relocates it outdoors, helping to make your home cooler. In the cooler months, a heat pump produces heat energy from the outside and moves it inside, which helps to warm your home.

Do they save energy?

Since heat pumps move heat, instead of create it, they do save energy! Energy.gov estimates that today's heat pumps can reduce a home's electricity use for heating by approximately 50% compared to traditional systems like furnaces and baseboard heaters.

Heat pumps for larger homes can save energy with a zone-heating feature, warming only rooms that are in use. High-efficiency heat pumps also dehumidify better than standard systems, resulting in less energy usage.

Is there more than one type?

Four primary types of heat pumps exist:

- **Air-to-air** or **air-source** pumps are the most common and are powered by electricity. They have an outdoor compressor/condenser unit that warms or cools the coils inside the air handler. It then circulates the warmed or cooled air through the system and pushes the air through ducts back into rooms. For homes without air ducts, air-source heat pumps are also available in a ductless version called a mini-split heat pump.
- **Air-to-water** heat pumps are actually a special type of air-source heat pump called a "reverse cycle chiller" that generates hot and cold water rather than air, allowing it to be used with radiant floor heating systems.
- **Geothermal** heat pumps, also known as ground-source or water-source heat pumps, can heat, cool, and even supply hot water to a home by transferring heat to or from the ground (or nearby water source), according to Energy.gov. Geothermal pumps cost more to install than other versions but have lower operating costs since they take advantage of relatively constant ground or water temperatures. They are typically more efficient and can be used in more extreme climates than air-source heat pumps (although air-source technology has improved).
- **Absorption** heat pumps are similar to air-source heat pumps except instead of using electricity to operate, they use alternative energy sources such as natural gas, propane, or solar- or geothermal-heated water.

To determine the best heat pump system for your home, contact a reputable heat pump installer/contractor to assess your home's needs.

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 Lucille Webinger and Richard and Janet Hovland.

Jesse Singerhouse, Manager

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