

Spotlight

FROM THE MANAGER— JIM HATHAWAY

Why Does the Power Blink?

At one time or another, we've all come home or woken up late for work to see a flashing "12:00" on our digital alarm clock. We then have to reset every digital clock in the house that doesn't have a battery backup, from the microwave oven to the answering machine. Usually, the flashing "12:00" was caused by a "blink" in the electrical system.

While power blinks can be annoying, they show that the electrical system is working exactly as designed. And while Dunn Energy Cooperative has taken steps to reduce the number of blinks

across its electric distribution system, it is almost impossible to eliminate blinks.

Why blinks?

Blinks happen when a breaker, or switch, opens along any portion of the power grid. The breaker usually opens when an electric fault happens. These can occur when a tree branch touches a line, lightning strikes, a squirrel or bird gets electrocuted, or a piece of equipment starts to malfunction.

Earlier this year a series of lightning storms hit our service territory. The

lightning caused damage to some lightning arresters on our electric grid. They did not fail immediately but gradually, causing the power to blink as they did.

When this happens, a relay senses a fault on the grid and tells the breaker to open. This stops the flow of power to the problem site. After opening, the breaker quickly closes. The brief delay, which sometimes allows the fault to clear, usually lasts less than two seconds. Just a blink off then back on.

If the fault clears, the power goes back on and stays on, but your clocks reset to 12:00. If we didn't have these breakers to open, the fault would likely cause an outage. Then the power would be shut down until a lineman came out to restore the power. While blinks, and having to reset our digital clocks, are annoying, so too are power outages. We think a momentary blink is less annoying than an outage that lasts an hour or two.



How Do We Contact You?

Every now and again we have to take some electrical services out of power to do maintenance or repairs on our system. When we do this, we send out an automated call informing members of the planned outage so they can plan accordingly. We don't want you to just get started on a birthday cake or loaf of bread and have the power go out!

Every time we do these calls, we have a handful of phone numbers that bounce back as disconnected, changed, or it's for the wrong person altogether.

We list your phone number(s) that we have on file on the bottom third of your electric bill. Please take a moment to verify that the number we have on file is the best number for you to get important notifications at. If it is not the correct number, you can make the correction on the stub and just mail it with your monthly statement. You can also make changes to this information by logging on to your SmartHub account online and clicking on My Profile. Otherwise, you can always call the office at 715-232-6240 to notify us of the change.

Please confirm this information is correct.

KEEP

SEND Please do not staple, tape, or paperclip to check Do we have your correct contact information?

Phone number: (715) 232-6240
 Mobile number: (715) 555-1212
 Email address: willie.wiredhand@dunnenergy.com

Statement Date 11/02/2018
 Account Number 12345678
 Total Amount Due 11/15/2018 \$140.00

WILLIE WIREDHAND
 1111 MAIN ST
 MENOMONIE WI 54751-0000

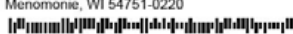
PAY YOUR BILL 24/7

SMARTHUB: The FREE online payment system! Access at dunnenergy.com or download the app on a compatible mobile device.

BY PHONE: Call 844-749-3050
To comply with industry standards, payments (other than by check or in person) need to be processed by the member through DEC's Pay-By-Phone system or other online means.

Dunn Energy Cooperative
 P.O. Box 220
 Menomonie, WI 54751-0220

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Reducing the number of blink's

Your co-op employs a number of methods to reduce blink frequency. Trees are the number one cause of faults and outages. Strong winds can cause branches to break off and fall into the power lines. And tree trimming is probably the easiest and most common way to reduce blinking lights.

(...continued on back)

FROM THE MANAGER...

Blinks (...continued from front)

To reduce faults and outages, we spend hundreds of thousands of dollars every year cutting trees in our power line rights-of-way.

Members can help with this task. Make sure Dunn Energy knows of any trees or limbs located close to a power line. Give us a call if you see a branch or tree that looks like it may make contact with one of our lines. We'll send out a qualified tree trimmer to safely remove the branch.

That being said, the causes to blinks aren't always as easy to find as seeing a drooping or broken branch. Over the years, linemen have chased blinks for months at a time, trying to figure out what the cause is. Some of the strangest causes we're run into are cattle itching their bum on guy wires causing the wires to slap together and

an entire flock of birds taking flight at the same time. A single bird doesn't weigh much, but a whole flock can cause a blink.

Meanwhile, you can reduce the frustration of blinks by purchasing an alarm clock equipped with a battery backup. This type of digital clock offers "ride through" ability for momentary outages. It will also keep the correct time and sound an alarm in case of a long-duration outage, provided a charged battery is in place. As an added benefit, these devices only use the battery in the event of a power interruption.

Blinks affect all electrical equipment, not just digital clocks. If there is a blink while you are operating a computer, your computer may crash and you will have to reboot, hoping all the while that

there will be few corrupted files.

An uninterruptible power supply (UPS) on your computer can help prevent information loss. The UPS incorporates surge suppression technology with a battery backup and provides you some time to save whatever you were working on and exit your computer properly.

The future of blinks

Dunn Energy Cooperative has an active system maintenance program and works hard to identify and fix sources of service interruptions. Even though blinks will never disappear from our electrical energy delivery system, by working together with we can minimize effects of the interruptions and the frequency with which they occur.

Co-op End-of-year reminders

Rebates and Incentives

Have you purchased any new Energy Star rated appliances in 2018? If you have, you may qualify for an Energy Sense incentive through Dunn Energy. We have incentives on new Energy Star rated appliances and LED lighting. We also have rebates on many new, efficient HVAC systems. Did you install a geothermal heat pump or an air source heat pump? We have rebates on those! You can find a full listing of rebates on our website at www.dunnenergy.com under Energy Sense>Rebates & Incentives. All rebates for any 2018 purchases have to be turned in no later than JANUARY 1,

2019 or they will not qualify.

Operation Round Up

Are you a not-for-profit group looking for help with a project you'd like to complete? Fourth quarter grant applications are due in our office no later than December 31, 2018. You can find a grant application on our website at www.dunnenergy.com or you can pick one up in our office. Maybe you're wondering if your group qualifies for a grant. Here are our Giving Guidelines:

Our mission is:

Operation Round Up contributions will be used primarily in the local area for charitable, educational and community needs to help provide opportunities

for long-range enhancement of the communities' quality of life.

Evaluation factors are:

- Generally awarded to non-profit programs, projects and organizations that improve the quality of life in our local communities and
- *Emphasize:* public safety, health care, self-sufficiency, basic human needs, our cultural environment, community leadership and social issues for youth.
- Only one grant per year will be awarded to an organization.

Holiday Office Hours

Monday, Dec. 24 Close at 2:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 25.....Office Closed

Monday, Dec. 31 Close at 3:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 1Office Closed



Spotlight



This newsletter is published for the members of Dunn Energy Cooperative. If you have questions or comments please give us a call. Visit the Energy Professionals at your local energy cooperative.

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