

# Spotlight

## FROM THE MANAGER— JIM HATHAWAY

### The New Year

**A**s I sit down to write this article, 2018 is coming to an end and 2019 is just around the corner. This past year was a good year for the cooperative. There was no rate increase needed. We continued to invest in upgrading lines and maintaining existing lines. Other than a large outage caused by a truck hitting a transmission line on Valentine’s Day, outage hours were kept below 2 hours per member for the third year in a row. And net margins came in above budget for the year.

At their December 2018 meeting, the co-op’s board of directors approved a 2019 budget that included a rate increase. It has been three years since the co-op had to change rates. We have made efforts to hold down costs, but expenses have increased. The cost of the power we buy from Dairyland Power is about 70% of our total costs. In 2019 the cost of the electricity that we buy from Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC) will be going up about 1%. Our power costs increased about 1.5% in 2018 but revenues were enough to cover the added costs. The amount of the rate increase will be determined in March but we expect that it will be less than 3% for the average member.

Looking to the new year, we will be finishing our software conversion early in 2019. Making the conversion has been challenging for staff and some of our members. We appreciate everyone’s patience in working through the changes. As I’ve said before, the new software does a lot more for us. Combined with our new metering system the software gives us better information on outages. This helps us restore power more quickly. It also gives us more frequent meter readings so we can better explain changes in bills to our members when they have concerns.

In 2019, your cooperative will be investing in more line upgrades. No major projects are planned, but we do plan on replacing several more miles of old copper weld line in 2019. The old line is reaching the end of its useful life and we have been working for several years to replace it with new, larger line. Some of the new line will also be put underground which helps reduce the likelihood of storm outages.

We plan on finishing the installation of our new meter reading system in 2019 as well. The old Turtle system is now 19 years old and is no longer

being supported by our vendor. The new system collects meter readings more quickly and will also provide us with outage information faster. While we do not offer “Time of Day” electric rates today, the new metering system will allow us to do so in the future if that is something the members want. We are also exploring the possibility of providing up to the minute information on electric usage for members who are interested.

Finally, we will continue to offer help to members who are looking to manage their electric bills. We offer a variety of rebates on energy efficient lighting and appliances. A complete list can be found on our newly updated website at [www.dunnenergy.com](http://www.dunnenergy.com). We have a variety of load management programs that reduce costs for members who allow us to control heating, water heating, and air conditioning loads during peak demand times. We also assist members interested in installing renewable systems, as well as continue to sell units in our SunDEC solar garden for members who don’t want to invest in a complete solar array.

Dunn Energy Cooperative has proudly served its members in most of Dunn County, parts of Chippewa, Barron, Pierce, Pepin, and St. Croix counties for over 80 years. The cooperative board of directors and employees remain dedicated to providing reliable and convenient electric energy services as well as making every hard-earned dollar our members pay for their electric energy go a little further.



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# Our New Website is Online!

Over the past several months we've been working diligently to upgrade to the newest version of website available to us through Touchstone Energy. We're happy to announce it is now online!

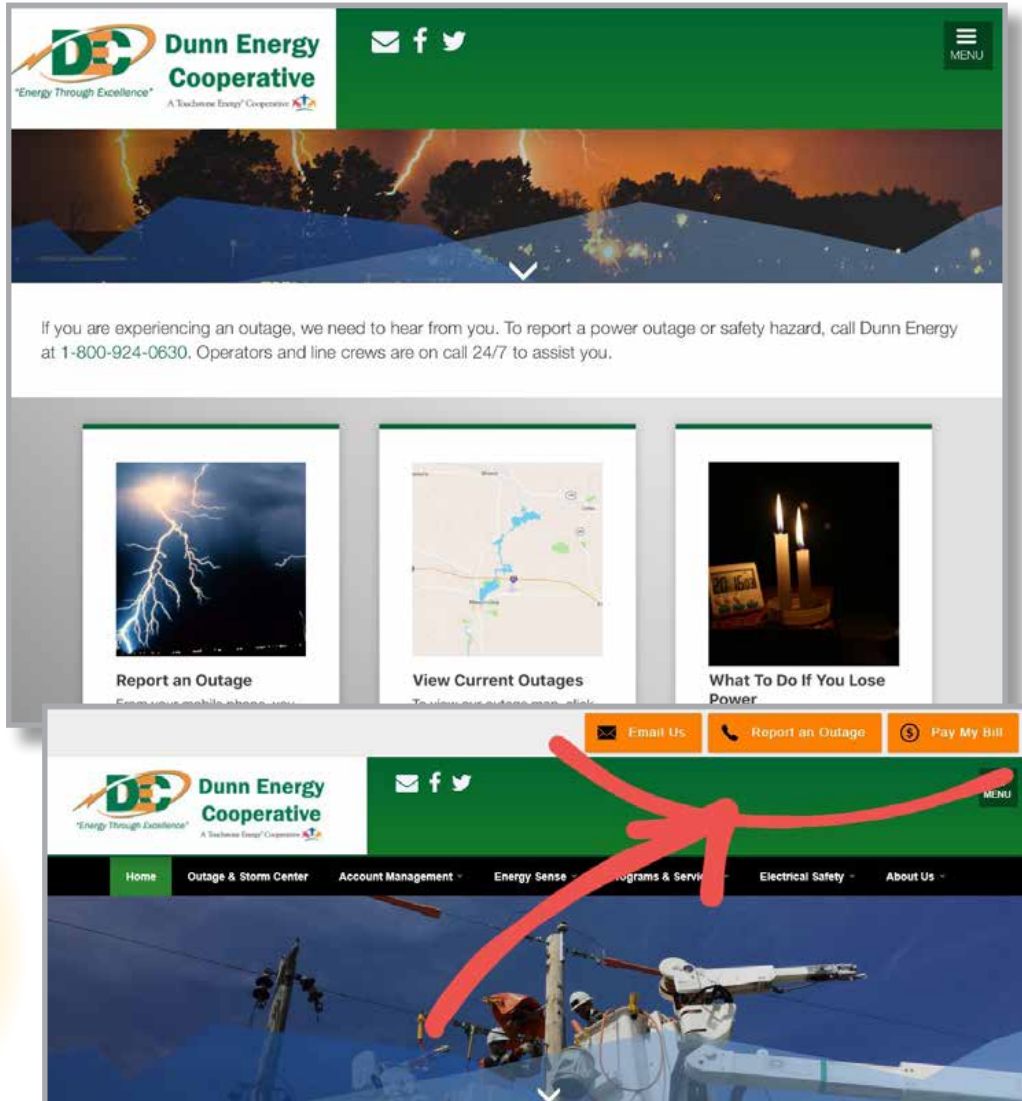
You still just visit us at [www.dunnenergy.com](http://www.dunnenergy.com), but things will look, hopefully, a lot cleaner. The upgraded site is what they call, dynamic and responsive. This means no matter what sort of device you look at it on, be it computer, tablet, or phone, it should adjust to the perfect size.

One of the biggest changes people who visit our website will notice is the Outage and Storm Center. You'll be able to report your outage from your mobile device with the click of a button! Coming in February, will be the Outage Map. This will be a map of our service territory that will show current outage information.

There are other updates we hope members will find useful, including being able to contact us or pay your bill by the click of a button. There is also easy access to our online marketplace and rebates page.

It's our goal to provide you, our member, with all of the information you need at the tip of your fingers. Please visit us at [www.dunnenergy.com](http://www.dunnenergy.com)

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**Visit us at [www.dunnenergy.com](http://www.dunnenergy.com)**

## Spotlight

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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.

Find us on Facebook

N5725 600th Street/ P.O. Box 220  
Menomonie, WI 54751-0220  
Phone: (715) 232-6240 or  
1-800-924-0630  
Web site: <http://www.dunnenergy.com>  
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## Calendar of Events

January 2019

- 11 Candlelight Snowshoe Hike** – Beaver Creek Reserve, Fall Creek – 6-9PM - Snowshoe Rental available – Admission fee required – Call 715-877-2212 for more information
- 19 Frosty Frolic** – Beaver Creek Reserve, Fall Creek – Snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, dogsledding and more! Again this year we will offer a 1K and 2K snowshoe hikes - 10AM to 4:30PM – Admission fee required – Call 715-877-2212 for more information

If you have any upcoming events you'd like to post in our calendar, please call Jolene at 232-6240 or email her at [jolene@dunnenergy.com](mailto:jolene@dunnenergy.com).