

Spotlight

March 2023

Be Prepared for Thunderstorms

March may not be historically known for major storms in Wisconsin, but it isn't unheard of. While a thunderstorm is only about 15 miles in diameter and lasts around 30 minutes, it can wreak havoc on our communities, so it pays to keep an ear to the forecast and an eye to the sky to know when one of these potentially devastating storms might blow through our area.

Thunderstorms can produce lightning, flash floods, hail, straight line winds, and tornadoes—all of which can be deadly and lead to hundreds of millions of dollars of property damage and extended power outages.

BEFORE THE STORM

Know the difference between a severe thunderstorm watch and warning. A watch means there is the possibility of storms in your area. A warning means a storm has been reported or is imminent and you should take cover.

The National Weather Service offers these tips to make sure you are prepared for spring and summer storms:

- Assemble necessary supplies for a potential outage (for a suggested list, visit SafeElectricity.org).
- Check the forecast and the hazardous weather outlook.
- Watch for signs of an approaching storm.
- If a storm is approaching, turn on a weather radio or an AM/FM radio for information.
- If a storm is imminent, stay inside until it passes.

If you find yourself outdoors during a storm, remember that if you can hear thunder, you are close enough to a storm to be struck by lightning. If possible, get inside or into a hard top vehicle—not a convertible. If safe shelter is not available, find a low spot away from trees, fences, and poles. If you are indoors when a storm strikes, stay away from windows, and go to the lowest level of your home. Unplug unnecessary appliances, and do not use corded phones. Cordless and cellular phones are safe.

AFTER THE STORM

Once the storm has passed, it does not mean the danger has. There

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Be Prepared for Thunderstorms continued

could be a variety of hazards left by the severe weather. Keep yourself and your family safe by being aware of the dangers after the storm.

DO NOT touch downed power lines or objects in contact with those lines. There is no way to know if that line is energized. A downed power line does not have to be arcing or smoking to be deadly. Stay away from the line and warn others to do the same. If you come across downed power lines, call 9-1-1 and your utility immediately.

The National Weather Service suggests other things to consider after the storm:

- If you are inspecting your home in the dark, use a flashlight rather than a candle or some other open flame to avoid the risk of fire or explosion due to a gas leak.
- If you see frayed wiring or sparks or if there is an odor of something burning, shut off the electrical system at the main circuit breaker if you know how to and can do so safely.
- If you smell gas or suspect a leak, open windows in the home if you can do so safely, and then get out of the house. If the smell is strong, leave immediately without touching any switches. Once outside, call 9-1-1, and notify your gas utility.

This is just a reminder to help keep you and your family safe during potentially dangerous weather. For more tips on how to stay safe during and after a storm, visit our website at dunnenergy.com/outage-information.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Do you have a home office? Set equipment like printers and scanners to automatically switch to sleep or energy-saver mode when not in use. In addition to saving energy, the equipment will stay cooler, which will help extend its life.

Another way to save in the home office is to use energy efficient lamps for task lighting. Small lamps use less energy than whole-room lighting.



FROM THE BOARD ROOM

January 2023 Board Meeting Highlights



Monthly Reports:

The Operations report discussed preordering the line truck scheduled to be replaced in 2024-25 due to supply chain issues and the amount of time it's taking for trucks to be built. They also discussed the

bidding for the County Highway T project in Chippewa County, as well as the County Road H project in Dunn County.

The team lead report on Member Services and Communications included information on the website upgrade being finished and the newly created Cooperative Family Fund. It was decided that the Cooperative will match all employee donations to the fund. There was also discussion around finding a speaker for the Annual Meeting on Thursday, May 18.

The CFO reported that financially, December sales were stronger than budget by about 4.8% and revenue was up just over 4%. For 2022, yearly sales grew 2.65% over budget. Overall, the Cooperative did very well for the year. However, the uncertainty of the power market, supply chain issues, and interest rates may keep things volatile in the year ahead.

The CEO/General Manager gave an overview on day-to-day operations as well as an update on the grant

through the federal government that the Cooperative has been working on. DEC has made it to step two in applying for funds to bolster the meter communications infrastructure through the NRECA grant consortium. He also provided an update on the One Energy Solar project. Employees met with One Energy Solar staff to discuss the details of the two 1.5 MW sites being built on DEC's system this year.

The following items were approved:

- Minutes of the December 2022 Board meeting
- Capital credit estate payout for deceased members
- Audit committee report of all checks, ACH payments, wire transfers, credit card statements, and investments accounts
- Update to rate policies
- Preorder of line truck for 2024-25
- Cooperative Family Fund donation

Other Business:

Director Zwiefelhofer reported on Dairyland Power activities for the month.

Reviewed the monthly report of new Cooperative members.

Reviewed the monthly governance video that discussed the Role of the Cooperative's Attorney.