

# Spotlight

May 2023



## Coming Up!

The Annual Meeting of Members will be held at the Cooperative office on Thursday, May 18. Registration is to begin at 5:30 p.m. and includes a light dinner. The business meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m.

Ballots and meeting information were mailed to members on April 25. Completed mail-in ballots are due in the cooperative office no later than Thursday, May 18 at 4:30 p.m. to be counted. They can also be brought with you to the meeting on the evening of Thursday, May 18.

For more information on candidates, visit our Director Elections page on our website at [www.dunnenergy.com](http://www.dunnenergy.com).



## CALLING ALL THIRD-GRADERS:

You're invited to participate in the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association's

## ELECTRICAL SAFETY POSTER CONTEST

Submit an original poster supporting electrical safety to your local electric cooperative by **May 31, 2023**, for a chance to win a **\$25 gift card!** The top three posters will be entered into the statewide poster contest for a chance to win one of three great prizes:

- 1st place – Chromebook
- 2nd place – \$100 Gift Card
- 3rd place – \$75 Gift Card

Visit [www.weca.coop](http://www.weca.coop) for details and an entry form.



## FROM THE BOARD ROOM

### March 2023 Board Meeting Highlights

#### Monthly Reports:

The Operations Department reported that the contractor, Tjader & Highstrom, is working on the County Highway T project for the Country Jam grounds and Sherman Creek Substation. The Operations Department is also working on the interconnection design for the two new large-scale solar projects on deck to begin this year as well as preparing for the next work plan.

The IT Director reported on the upcoming phone system upgrade, allowing for better auto-attendant options. Currently if a member does not choose either option, they are forwarded to the after-hours call center. The new technology will allow calls to be transferred to the office during business hours if a member does not choose an option. The software will also allow for employees to answer the phones from home should the need arise.

The CFO reported on current financial issues in the US and global markets and the Cooperative's borrowing needs. During the financial report the board also heard from the auditing firm on the results of the annual audit. To no surprise, the auditors reported that the cooperative had a clean audit.

The CEO/General Manager gave an update on the projects submitted to NRECA for possible grant awards as well as proposing changes to the line extension costs, which affect the installation of new services and upgrading of existing facilities. It was also reported that longtime employee, Dave Hoffman will retire at the end of March after 31 years with the cooperative. Many members have dealt with Hoffman over the years as he was the lead for vegetation management on the system.

#### The following items were approved:

- Minutes of the February 2023 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.

#### 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 Business Judgement Rule

# May is Electrical Safety Month *Thousands Treated Every Year for Chainsaw Injuries*

It may not seem logical to be reading an article about chainsaw safety in regard to electrical safety month but they can go hand in hand. Each year, approximately 36,000 people are treated in hospital emergency departments for injuries caused by using chainsaws. The potential risk of injury increases after tornadoes and other natural disasters when chainsaws are widely used to remove fallen or partially fallen trees and tree branches.

When trimming trees, do not trim near power lines. Only OSHA-certified line clearance tree trimmers are allowed by law to trim within 10-feet of power lines.

Aside from serious injury or electrocution from contact with, or getting too close to, an overhead power line or other electrical source, the three most common injuries from chainsaws are caused by kickback, binding and pull-in.

Kickback occurs when the chain's teeth catch on something as they rotate around the tip of the blade. It may also happen when the nose strikes another object, starts to bore a cut improperly or catches the bottom or side of a cut while being reinserted.

Binding (or pinching) occurs when the material clamps down and stalls the cutting chain.

Pull-in happens when the chain at the bottom of the bar stops suddenly due to pinching or striking a foreign object, which can draw the saw forward.

When using a chainsaw on a job or at home, always wear protective clothing and glasses. Other basic safety tips include:

- Read the owner's manual carefully before operating a chainsaw.
- Choose the proper size and type of chainsaw for the job.
- Be sure that bystanders maintain a safe distance from cutting activities.
- Check for hazards near the job, such as power lines, poles or other cables.

## When trimming trees and branches:

- Take extra care when cutting branches that have been bent, twisted, hung up on or caught under another object under high wind.
- Realize that branches and trees react in different ways when they are cut, depending on the type, age and condition of the tree, as well as external factors such as weather and wind speed/direction. Other variables can also exist.

In addition, here are some other safety tips to follow when using a chainsaw.

## DO:

- Make sure all safety functions on the saw work properly and are in place.
- Keep the chain clean, sharp and lubricated with the correct oil.
- Keep the cutting area clear.
- Work with a partner.
- Avoid overhead hazards, such as utility lines or dead, hanging limbs that may fall.
- Be careful of inclines and uneven ground.
- Stand to the side of what you are cutting.
- Keep the saw as close to you as possible for better control.
- Keep both hands on the saw handles.
- Cut at full throttle (i.e., bring the saw up to speed before starting to cut).
- Let the saw come to a complete stop before reaching for the chain or bar.
- Turn off the saw or activate the chain brake when carrying the saw.

- Ensure the saw is well-maintained and in proper working order.

## DO NOT:

- Do not operate a saw alone.
- Do not wear loose clothing.
- Do not use the tip to cut.
- Do not cut with a chainsaw above shoulder height.
- Do not refuel a hot saw.

The tips provided are not all-inclusive; instead, they are a reminder to keep safety first. Remember, an injury is much more inconvenient, painful and costly than taking the time to do the job safely.




## Clean up with care

Once the storm has passed, it is tempting to go straight into yard clean-up mode. However, take time for safety.

Do not go outside if there is a power outage. There could be a downed power line, which could cause electrocution. Sometimes, downed lines can be covered by branches, storm debris, water, snow or ice.

### Keep these additional safety tips in mind:

- Do not trim trees/branches within 10 feet of a power line.
- Read all instructions and be familiar with equipment you intend to use.
- Do not use a chainsaw for the first time during cleanup.
- Follow all safety recommendations when using power tools.
- Carry a ladder horizontally instead of vertically.
- Look for overhead power lines before carrying a ladder.
- Always look up for overhead power lines before removing debris from gutters.
- Take your time. Rushing can result in serious injury.
- Wear proper shoes and clothing when using ladders and power tools.
- Call your electric utility to report branches in power lines; never try to remove them yourself.

 Remember, wait until an outage is restored before going outside to assess the damage.

