



INVESTING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

By Jesse Singerhouse, General Manager

Every day, in communities across our service territory, there is usually some type of event or activity happening. That could be a benefit dinner at a local church, a youth sporting event, or some type of educational program. In fact, as I write this, my daughter and I have just returned from weighing in her steers for the county fair in July. To make this initial weigh-in happen several dedicated volunteers had set up the scale, chute, and gates. They were donating their time and investing in the 4-H and FFA members in our county. There are countless examples from around our area of people working together to make their community a better place.

Just a simple search today on some local news pages and Facebook showed an organization offering free tax return preparation for those in need, a fundraising raffle being conducted for a local youth sports group, a donation drive for gently used games and puzzles for a local library, and an advertisement for a local art exhibit people can attend. Things just don't happen in a community; they happen because of individual people taking the initiative to work together. From Bloomer to Elmwood and from Boyceville to Durand and all the communities in between, good things are happening because of you. Thank you to each one of our members who volunteer with organizations around the area.

Your cooperative can also play a part in investing in our communities. One of our core principles as a

cooperative is Concern for Community. Initiatives like our Operation Round Up (ORU) program and our scholarship program are strong examples of our commitment to the area we serve. In this issue, you'll read about the most recent projects and organizations supported by our ORU program. ORU is supported by over 70% of our members

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who have their bill rounded up to the next whole dollar. That spare change, about \$6 per year from each member, is combined to make a major impact on our community. Each quarter we accept grant applications, which

can be completed on our website, www.dunnenergy.com, or picked up in our office. Then a group of Dunn Energy member-owners meet to select the grant recipients. ORU truly embraces the cooperative purpose of members being engaged in their cooperative and working together to benefit our community.

Members of Dunn Energy Cooperative, our main focus is to safely deliver reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible energy all while remaining steadfast in our commitment to being a Cooperative that invests in our community.



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 David & Amanda Webb and Chris & Mary Monn.



RECAP 2023

It was another great year of giving for the members of Dunn Energy Cooperative. Through the Operation Round Up (ORU) grant program, members who participate in the program provided over \$35,000 in grants local area not-for-profit organizations in 2023.

The ORU committee, made up of members from different areas of our service territory, met four times in 2023 and awarded grants to 17 different organizations, ranging from The Neighbors of Dunn County for their new bus to Landmark Conservancy for signage for the Devil's Punchbowl. Grants helped five local fire departments and two local police departments, as well as numerous food pantries and children's organizations. (319004)

Operation Round Up is voluntarily funded by members who have their electric bill rounded up to the nearest dollar, with the extra "change" set aside for community grants. The average donation for a member is roughly \$6 per year, but can range from \$.01-\$11.88 annually, depending on usage.

Information on Operation Round Up can be found on our website under Programs and Services. You can also find the Giving Guidelines and the application for funds there as well. Grants are awarded quarterly, with deadlines for application on March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31 annually.



Above: Durand Fire Department got a grant for firefighting equipment.



Above: The local organization of Thursday's Table was able to purchase a year's worth of clamshell containers for their to-go boxes. Right: The Menomonie Police Department, after a long wait, received their less lethal launcher (that launches dense foam balls) that was purchased through an Operation Round Up grant.



Left: Dunn Energy Cooperative and Xcel Energy partnered to bring a new sign to the Devil's Punchbowl for visitors to the iconic natural landmark. Above: Everyone squeezed in to the kitchen of the Elk Mound Village Park concession stand to show off the new defibrillator that was purchased with ORU funds. Below left: Elk Mound Fire District firefighters display their new particulate hoods that were purchased with an Operation Round Up grant. Below right: The Menomonie Fire Department was able to purchase Stop the Bleed kits for every school in the Menomonie school district through community grants, including one through Operation Round Up.



Operation Round Up® uses the power of cooperation to provide much-needed grant dollars for community projects, 501©3 organizations, and non-profit groups within the Dunn Energy Cooperative service territory.

If you, or a group you are a part of, are interested in applying for an Operation Round Up grant, you can find the application and our Giving Guidelines on our website at www.dunnenergy.com or by emailing Jolene for an application at jolene@dunnenergy.com. Grant applications are due March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31 and reviewed shortly thereafter.

Thank you for your interest. Let's show the community the Power of Change!

HOW EXTREME WINTER WEATHER IMPACTS RELIABILITY

When outdoor temperatures drop, our electricity use increases. That's because we're doing more activities inside, and our heating systems are running longer and more often to counteract colder outdoor temperatures. Factor in that we all tend to use electricity at the same times—in the morning and early evenings—and that equals a lot of strain on our electric grid.

At Dunn Energy Cooperative, we work closely with our local generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative, Dairyland Power Cooperative, in resource and infrastructure planning to ensure you have the power you need whenever you flip a switch, but the electric grid is much larger than our local co-op and G&T. (2482001)

In winter months, when even more electricity is being used simultaneously across the country, it is possible for electricity demand to exceed supply, especially if an unexpected event like a sudden snow or ice storm or equipment

malfunction occurs. If this happens, which is rare, MISO (the grid operator for our region) may call for rolling power outages to relieve pressure on the grid, and Dunn Energy will inform you about the situation.

Dunn Energy and Dairyland Power Cooperative take proactive steps to create a resilient portion of the grid and ensure electric reliability in extreme weather, including regular system maintenance, grid modernization efforts, and disaster response planning; but it takes everyone to keep the grid reliable.

To help keep the heat on for you, your family and neighbors, here are a few things you can do to relieve pressure on the grid (and save a little money along the way):

- Select the lowest comfortable thermostat setting and turn it down several degrees whenever possible. Your heating system must run longer to make up the difference between

the thermostat temperature and the outdoor temperature.


Pro tip: Seal air leaks around windows and exterior doors with caulk and weatherstripping. Air leaks and drafts force your heating system to work harder than necessary.

- Stagger your use of major appliances such as dishwashers, ovens and dryers. *Pro tip: Start the dishwasher before you go to bed and use smaller countertop appliances like slow cookers and air fryers to save energy.*
- Ensure that your heating system is optimized for efficiency with regular maintenance and proper insulation. *Pro tip: Unless you need a HEPA filter for health reasons, just buy a regular filter. The thinner ones have better air flow. Better air flow = greater efficiency.*
- When possible, use cold water to reduce water heating costs. *Pro tip: Turning your water heater thermostat down to 120 degrees can help you save energy and reduce mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes.*
- Unplug devices when not in use to eliminate unnecessary energy use. Even when turned off, electronics in standby mode consume energy. *Pro tip: Plug devices into a power strip so you can turn them all off at once with the push of a button.*

As we face the challenges posed by winter weather, understanding its impact on energy demand is crucial for maintaining a reliable power supply. By adopting energy conservation practices during periods of extreme cold, you can save money on your electric bills and also contribute to the resilience of the power grid.

BEST BETS FOR Winter Savings

Energy consumption spikes during winter months as we spend more time indoors and heating systems work overtime. You can help reduce demand and strain on the electric grid by conserving during peak energy times. Reducing energy use will also help lower your energy bills.

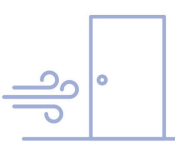



UNPLUG WHEN POSSIBLE

Turn off unnecessary lights and electronics when you aren't using them.

ELIMINATE DRAFTS AND AIR LEAKS

Seal air leaks and drafts around windows and exterior doors.






MAINTAIN HEATING EQUIPMENT

Maintain your heating system by replacing dirty, clogged filters and scheduling an annual inspection for necessary maintenance.


USE APPLIANCES WHEN ENERGY DEMAND IS LOWER

Run large appliances like clothes washers, dryers and dishwashers early in the morning or before you go to bed.



LOWER THE THERMOSTAT

Home heating accounts for a large portion of energy consumption. Adjust your thermostat to the lowest comfortable setting (68 degrees or lower).



Jesse Singerhouse, Manager

N5725 600th St., P.O. Box 220, Menomonie, WI 54751
715-232-6240
www.dunnenergy.com

Jolene Fisher, Editor



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