



PLANNING FOR 2023

By Jesse Singerhouse, General Manager

The fall through year-end is a very busy time for the cooperative; we wrap up 2022 and finish our planning for 2023. Year-end brings a flurry of activity in our operations department as we try to finish many of our line upgrade projects before winter begins. We also get very busy installing new electric services to members before the ground freezes. The end of the year also includes some accounting projects, preparations for winter load management programs, and an increase in energy efficiency rebate questions. When you combine all that with the holidays, and for some chasing the elusive whitetail deer, it makes for a busy time of year.

Planning for 2023 also takes up a good amount of staff and board time. In actuality, with the supply-chain issues we have experienced, planning for 2023 projects probably began last spring/summer as some materials have 50+ week lead times. So just as soon as we approve the budget later this month staff will start working on materials planning for 2024 and maybe even 2025. With the critical nature of our business, we are working diligently to secure materials and supplies that allow us to continue to deliver you reliable energy.

In late December your board of directors will approve a budget for the cooperative. As I mentioned last month a rate increase in the 4–8% range, the first since September of 2019, will be needed this year due to an increase in our purchased power costs from Dairyland Power and the significant increase in material costs we are seeing locally. Purchased power represents the largest expense in our budget, representing nearly 70% of our expenses. Construction of new lines and maintenance of existing lines represent another large expense to the cooperative.

Your power quality, in large part, is determined by the preventative maintenance we do on the electric system. Storms will still happen and interrupt power but if we can

Norking for You

perform routine maintenance on lines and equipment it increases the quality of power you receive. Right-of-way and tree clearing is a major component of power quality as well. We've already started our line clearing in the Caryville area and the crews will be making their way through Rock Falls and Connorsville as well. We take a common-sense approach to our budget. We look for ways to become more efficient and try to do the most we can with the dollars we receive.

Expenses are one portion of the budget; the other is predicting sales. Electric sales tend to be driven by the

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weather. A very cold winter or a hot/dry summer can lead to increased kilowatt consumption, or the opposite could be true if we have a mild winter and a pleasant summer with adequate moisture. When we plan for sales, we look back at the last 3–5 years and come up with an average. We also look at any new loads that

might come on the system. This could be a new business, farm expansion, or a residential development. As electric vehicles become more popular they could affect our sales as well. The prices of home heating fuels might drive more members to use electricity as well.

Developing a budget can be a little tricky for the cooperative. But we do our best to pull together all the data, plan for system improvements, and keep the cooperative financially healthy. We do that all with the goal of serving our member-owners as the foundation of every decision we make.

As I've stated several times, our goal at your cooperative is to safely deliver our members reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible energy both today and in the future. 2022 was a good year for the cooperative and we look forward to serving your energy needs in the years ahead. On behalf of the board of directors and employees of Dunn Energy Cooperative, I wish you all a blessed holiday season.

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 Sheri Debates and Kenneth Smith.

PARTICIPANTS IN WINTER LOAD MANAGEMENT TO SEE CONTROL CHANGES

Grid reliability is a major responsibility for utilities – from the regional transmission system all the way down to Dunn Energy Cooperative's local grid.

our cooperative has successfully managed our load management program for over 35 years. Through the continued participation of thousands of members, we will continue to reduce our need for electricity during times of high demand and high electricity prices. This is a strategic partnership between the cooperative and members aimed at providing you, our members, reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible energy.

To help ensure electricity is available year-round and reduce the amount of energy we need to purchase when prices are high, our power provider (DPC) and the regional transmission operator (MISO) have made some changes to our load management program. In the past we've controlled load based on local demand. Starting this winter, we will have targeted controls based more on regional demand. This means our controls could be affected by weather conditions in other areas of the Midwest. (See map for MISO footprint below)

Earlier this summer we talked about grid reliability and the events that

MISO North

Eagan, MN

threaten grid reliability. These events happen when demand for energy is too high, and the supply is too low, and we run the possibility of rolling blackouts. These changes will help reduce the likelihood of that happening.

Water Heater Changes As of

Nov. 1, 2022, residential electric water heaters are being controlled during a Maximum Generation (Max Gen) Event. These water heaters will also continue to participate in economic control events when electricity prices are high in the regional market.

Enrolled residential electric water heaters 50 gallons or more require a load control box and participants get a \$4 credit monthly based on usage of 400 or more kWhs per month.

Dual Fuel Changes The other major change to the winter full load control program will be the control time for members who participate in the dual fuel program. A review of winter electricity peaks in the MISO system revealed that 60 percent of peaks occurred in the morning. So, instead of the regular 5–9 p.m. control window

that we've gotten used to, dual fuel loads will typically Dairyland Power be controlled in the morning, from 7–10 a.m. Participants on the dual fuel program are required to have hard-wired electric heat (i.e., baseboard, geothermal heat pump, electric boiler), two meters, and a non-electric back-up heating source. This allows for a reduced rate for the energy on that meter. You can always see if any of your loads are being

controlled by visiting our website at www.dunnenergy.com/load-management and clicking on Residential Load Control Status. If you aren't sure which strategy your water heater is on, 1A is typically water heaters 50–75 gallons and 1B is typically water heaters 80 gallons or more. (9989001)

For more information or to see if you're eligible to enroll in Dunn Energy Cooperative's load management program, contact Chris Marlett at 715-232-6240.

Load Management Changes Recap:

The Winter Full Load Control (FLC) strategy specifically targets the months December, January, and February. New this winter season, there will be a morning FLC period and an evening FLC period. Dual Fuel Heat load classes will participate in the morning period, while Dairy Water Heaters and Grain Dryers will participate in the evening period. There will be up to seven morning events and seven evening events this season, with a minimum of one event per FLC month, respectively.

Residential Water Heaters: Economic, Max Gen Event, and

local reliability controls

Dual Fuel: Winter FLC morning, winter economic, and local reliability controls

Dairy Water Heaters: FLC Winter evening & Summer, Economic Winter & Summer controls

Grain Drying: FLC Winter evening & Summer



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MY CO-OP

OUCH! That Hurts. Troubleshooting a High Electric Bill

o you think your energy bill seems higher than normal? The U.S. Energy Information Administration is expecting higher-than-normal costs for the heating season based on current fuel prices and a higher heating demand due to a slightly colder than winter this year than last.



If your bill seems a little higher than normal, here are some things to consider:

- ✓ Do you have a space heater running? Did you know that the average 1,500-watt space heater running only 5 hours per day costs approximately \$25 to run over the course of a month?
- ✓ Do you have heating tape on pipes? (Average cost of \$3.85/month when on 24 hours per day)
- ✓ Are you plugging a vehicle in? (2,500-watt heater for a diesel engine at 2.5 hours per use averages \$64/month)
- ✓ Do you have a humidifier running?
- ✓ Do you have a tank heater for animals?
- ✓ Do you have a heat lamp for chickens?

Here's how you figure out what any electrical appliance costs to run:

- 1. Find out how many watts per day the item uses (take the wattage listed on the item and multiply it by how many hours a day you have it running)
- 2. Convert that number to kilowatts (take the number of watts from #1 and divide it by 1,000)
- 3. Find the monthly usage (take your kilowatts and multiply it by how many days are in the month)
- 4. Figure out the cost (take your usage from #3 and multiply it by your electric rate)

So that space heater we were talking about would be figured out like this:

All of these things add up. All of these things are outside of your normal usage. So, if your bill is higher than normal, start with a little home audit to see what you've turned on since the weather got colder. (140020035)

Pro tip: if you're having a hard time remembering, pop on to your SmartHub account. You should be able to see when your usage started to go up. Maybe the date will help you remember what was plugged in at that time.

Then it's time to do some math.



1,500 watts x 5 hours per day = 7,500 watts

 $7,500 \div 1000 = 7.5$ kilowatts

7.5 kilowatts x 31 days in December = 232.5 kilowatt hours

232.5 kWh x 10.64 cents/kWh = \$24.74

You can use that formula for any electrical appliance as long as you know the wattage. For more energy-saving tips, visit us online at dunnenergy.com and navigate to the Energy Sense page and click on Use Energy Wisely. If you'd rather have a paper copy of the booklet, just give the office a call. We'd be happy to send you one. The holiday season is the time when we cherish old traditions and enjoy creating new ones. All of us here at Dunn Energy want to wish you a merry and bright holiday season, and we look forward to serving you and our community in 2023!

> Have a safe and happ holiday season!

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