



FINDING A BALANCED ENERGY POLICY

By Jesse Singerhouse, General Manager

Having worked in the energy industry for many years, I've seen numerous policy proposals and other ideas from elected officials and agencies at both our State and Federal levels. Many of these ideas have been really good and some have had a negative impact on the members of our cooperative. As with any issue nowadays, unfortunately, many of these issues have been divided politically. At Dunn Energy Cooperative, our staff and board members have done a great job of working with all legislators and agencies regardless of what political party is in charge. Personally, I've had great conversations and have been part of several projects with both Democratic and Republican legislators. We've worked with many agencies on rural development projects that were led by members of different political parties. The reason we have had good relationships with elected officials is because we put our core purpose first to safely deliver to our members reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible energy.

The core purpose of your cooperative hasn't changed over the years. We keep that purpose at the center of everything we do so we can try to achieve balanced results for our members. Safety of our employees and crew will always come first. Reliability, affordability, and environmentally responsible energy is always a balance, which I've written about many times. I've compared it to a 3-legged stool and how we could work on just one of the legs, but our stool would get out of

balance and cause issues with the other two.

In the months ahead, we will be meeting with elected officials and agency leaders locally, as well as on the State

At Dunn Energy Cooperative, our staff and board members have done a great job of working with all legislators and agencies regardless of what political party is in charge.

and Federal levels. Our hope is that we can find a balanced approach to our energy policy. Over the last 25 years, I believe we have experienced a whip saw approach to our energy policy depending on who was in office. This type of policy approach makes it difficult to plan long-term. In our industry, we need a good amount of time to both plan and develop new sources of energy and to set up the distribution and transmission lines that are needed to move the energy to where our members need it. Uncertainty in our future energy policy causes many challenges for our Cooperative and eventually our members.

Let's work together and encourage our elected officials locally, in Madison, and in Washington, D.C. to develop a long-term, practical, and balanced approach to energy policy with the goals of safety, reliability, affordability, and environmental responsibility top of mind.

Working for You

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 James Maki & Lindsay Christiansen and Jeff & Darlene Bochman.

OPERATION ROUND UP RECAP 2024:

MEMBER DOLLARS FUND IMPORTANT WORK

In 2024, members who participate in Operation Round Up funded over \$25,000 in grants. These funds stayed in the communities we serve and helped very deserving organizations. From filling backpacks with school supplies and providing personal hygiene kits for underserved students to helping build a covered shelter at the Lion's Club game park to food pantry supplies, the members of Dunn Energy Cooperative did great work in our communities. They supported organizations from Durand and Spring Valley to Ridgeland and Sand Creek.

The 17 organizations that were supported in 2024 were:

- Alano Club of Menomonie
- Elk Mound High School
- Ridgeland Community Fair
- Town of Sand Creek Parks & Rec
- Friends of Menomonie Recreation
- Wisconsin Foster Closet
- Durand Youth Fishing Contest
- Wisconsin Milkweed Alliance
- Chippewa Valley Council, Boy Scouts of America
- Food Harvest Ministry
- Reach Out & Read
- Staying Put, Inc.
- Menomonie Lion's Club
- Durand Trapshooter's Association
- School District of Elmwood
- Durand Women's Club
- Dunn County Home and Community Education

Operation Round Up is funded by members who opt to have their energy bill rounded up to the nearest dollar. That extra "change", averaging \$6 per year, is put in a fund to support local not-for-profit organizations in the communities we serve. If you participate in the program, you can find your total contribution, for tax purposes, on your February bill.

The applications are reviewed by a committee of members who meet quarterly and determine which grants meet the giving guidelines and are funded. If you are interested in getting involved with this committee, please email info@dunnenergy.com to learn more.

If you are a part of a not-for-profit organization in our community and have a project that needs additional funding, please check out our Operation Round Up page on our website, under Programs & Services, to learn more.



Youth participate in the October Boy Scouts of America Fall Cub Camp, which was supported by a grant through Operation Round Up.

OPERATION ROUND UP GIVING GUIDELINES

Our mission is: ORU contributions will be used primarily in the local area for charitable, educational, and community needs to help provide opportunities for long-range enhancement of the communities' quality of life.

Evaluation factors

Generally awarded to non-profit programs, projects and organizations that improve the quality of life in our local communities and

Emphasize: public safety, health care, self-sufficiency, basic human needs, our cultural environment, community leadership and social issues for youth. Only one grant per year will be awarded to an organization.

Grants are **generally** not awarded to:

- » lobbying
- » political causes
- » religious causes
- » veteran organizations
- » fraternal organizations
- » fundraising dinners
- » raffles or events
- » individuals
- » capital fund campaigns
- » scholarship programs
- » general operating funds
- » national fund drives
- » advertising



YOU ASK. WE ANSWER.

CAN I GET MY BILL EARLIER?

Last August we emailed a member survey out to over 5,400 people and received hundreds of comments. We've had some time to comb through the comments and will be answering some of the more common questions and concerns here in the magazine. This month we'll talk about when you get your bill, and why it comes when it does.

Question: Can we get the bill earlier?

We get that question a lot with landlords who rebill tenants, members who get their social security funds on the first, or those who just like paying bills right away.


Answer: Maybe?





You see, we typically bill for the full previous month. You get billed for the amount of electricity you used, and possibly peak demand depending on your rate, last month, so we have to wait for the first business day after the last day of the month to run the billing process, typically making the bill available a day or so later. Sometimes, especially if there's a holiday or it falls on the weekend, that first business day can be a few days into the month. The postal service is slower than it used to be as well. (1448001) This can make the arrival of your bill very delayed.

If you need to get your bill as early as possible, the best way to accomplish that is by signing up for a SmartHub account and adding a "Bill Available" notification to come by email or text message. Your bill is visible on your SmartHub account as soon as it's posted in our Customer Information System. Then you can login to view, print, and pay your bill.

Did you know SmartHub is for more than just viewing and paying your bill? You can contact the co-op, check your daily usage, report outages, and check out the monthly publications.

Are there other questions you'd like to see answered here? Please send suggestions to info@dunnenergy.com.



-  Report outages and other issues
-  Contact Co-op when convenient
-  Set usage notifications
-  See payment history

ENERGY ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE



WESTCAP PROVIDES ENERGY ASSISTANCE FOR BARRON, CHIPPEWA, DUNN, PEPIN, PIERCE AND ST. CROIX COUNTIES

As the heating season quickly ends, we'd like to remind everyone of the services available to help with your energy bill, should the need arise.

The Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) provides assistance for heating costs, electric costs, and energy crisis situations and is administered through the WestCAP organization. Operating with federal and state funding, the program provides assistance to households across our service area to help lower the burden of monthly energy costs.

WHEAP assistance is a one-time payment during the heating season (October 1-May 15). The funding pays a portion of energy costs, and the payment is not intended to cover the entire annual energy costs of a residence. The amount of energy assistance you may receive varies depending on a variety of factors, including the household's size, income, and energy costs. (4498002)

Crisis Assistance

Crisis assistance may be available if you have no heat, are nearly out of fuel, or your electricity has been or will soon be shut off.

Furnace Assistance

The Home Energy Plus (HE+) Furnace Program provides services to eligible homeowners and some renters when their heating system stops operating or is operating in an unsafe manner. HE+ Furnace Program assistance can include repairs, or in some situations, a total replacement of an inoperable system. Call WestCAP immediately if you are experiencing a no-heat situation.

For more information on all their programs, please call WestCAP at 715-598-4750. You can also visit their website for an application at <https://westcap.org/services/energy-assistance>.

Jesse Singerhouse, Manager

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

Jolene Fisher, Editor



**Dunn Energy
Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 