

# highline



AUG. 2018 NEWS FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT PEOPLE'S ENERGY COOPERATIVE



## IN THIS ISSUE:

*CEO Message*

*2018 NRECA Youth Tour*

*ORU Grants*

*Sizing up Your Electric System*

*Farmer's Market*



### MANAGEMENT STAFF

Elaine J. Garry,  
*President/CEO*

Gary Fitterer,  
*Director of Engineering*

Mike Henke,  
*Chief Financial Officer*

Michelle Olson,  
*Director of Member Services*

Gwen Stevens,  
*Director of Member & Community Relations*

Troy Swancutt,  
*Director of Operations*

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Office Hours:

7:30 am – 4:00 pm, M–F

Telephone: 507-367-7000

Toll-Free: 800-214-2694

Web Address:

[www.peoplesenergy.coop](http://www.peoplesenergy.coop)

Gopher State One Call:

1-800-252-1166

(for digging & line location)

## RENEWABLE ENERGY SINCE 1998

*The Evergreen program has been an easy and affordable way for members to support the development of renewable energy that includes utility-scale solar installations.*

Evergreen was developed by Dairyland Power Cooperative, our primary power provider, to provide members an opportunity to voluntarily contribute to the increased use of renewable energy. Starting at \$1 per month, participants are assigned one Evergreen block of 100 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of clean, renewable energy. To celebrate the 20th anniversary of Evergreen, People's Energy Cooperative members have more opportunities to participate in ways that fit their lifestyle or budget.

- **Evergreen Everyone:** *The original program that enables members to support utility-scale renewable energy in increments of 100 (kWh) blocks for just \$1 per block per month (\$0.01 per kWh).*
- **Evergreen Everyday:** *Members who enroll in a storage strategy for their electric water heater will receive up to four Evergreen blocks to help keep their water hot.*
- **Evergreen Everywhere:** *Members who charge their electric vehicle during off-peak hours will receive up to four blocks.*



- **Evergreen Everything:** *Members can choose to have 100 percent of their electricity use generated by renewable energy for \$1 per 100 kWh block. The average cooperative home uses around 1,000 kWh per month, which equals \$10 per month.*

"We understand purchasing a private system – whether a wind turbine or solar array – is not feasible for all members due to financial or location constraints," People's Energy Cooperative President and CEO Elaine Garry said. "For example, members may have trees that shade their home during the summer – which is a great energy efficiency strategy – however that means rooftop solar is not a viable option. With Evergreen, members still have the opportunity to support renewable energy."

Each Evergreen block is tracked and billed monthly. Subscriptions are in addition to any federal or state required renewable portfolio standards and help Dairyland increase its use of renewable energy. Currently, renewable energy makes up 18 percent of Dairyland's power generation portfolio, including solar, wind, hydro, and biogas.

*For more info about participating in Evergreen, call us at **800-214-2694** or visit us at **[peoplesenergy.coop](http://peoplesenergy.coop)**.*

# CEO MESSAGE

FROM ELAINE J. GARRY, PRESIDENT & CEO



*Elaine J. Garry*

egarry@peoplesrec.com

*I recently attended the Minnesota Rural Electric Association's (MREA) Energy Issues Summit (EIS). This gathering of electric cooperative leaders from across the state addresses new challenges in the energy industry that are evolving our business, changing member expectations, and causing regulatory models to become outdated.*

---

The theme of this year's summit was "Navigating Disruption" which is certainly relevant and timely for the electric utility industry. As technology evolves, our industry is facing challenges that may ultimately alter the way we do business and how the entire industry operates.

For the first 70 years of the Cooperative's existence, we received power from one source and distributed it to our members. Today, we purchase electricity from two power providers, generate electricity from three solar arrays, and are interconnected to 77 member-owned distributed generation systems (*solar arrays and wind turbines*).

This mix of energy sources is shifting, or evolving, us from simply distributing electricity to becoming more of a manager or facilitator of energy; this challenges our electrical system and rate structures.

While new technology can pose challenges, it also presents opportunities for us to enter new markets and add to the value we provide members. The "internet of things" (*i.e. smart home technology*) and electric vehicles are becoming more prevalent and I believe through these emerging technologies we can become even more energy efficient and better utilize renewable energy resources.

As more renewable energy comes online, and new technology emerges to efficiently and effectively utilize that energy, I believe we need to reform regulations around energy. For example, The Next Generation Energy Act of 2007 established energy-saving goals and gave birth to Minnesota's Conservation Improvement Program (*CIP*).

The intent of CIP was, and still is, to help Minnesota households and businesses use electricity more efficiently, promote the use of renewable energy, and reduce greenhouse gas. I believe it has served its purpose and could do more, but a few things need to change.

Currently, CIP measures success by the reduction of kilowatt hours (*kWhs*) for electric utilities. While this is a good way to measure energy efficiency, it doesn't account for the fact that more equipment is being 'electrified'. It also misses the opportunity to leverage Minnesota's portfolio of renewable energy.

For example, as more electric vehicles come on the market and gain popularity, we could leverage wind power if members charge their vehicles at night when energy demand is lowest and wind production is highest. This allows for more effective use of wind power. The challenge - as more people drive electric vehicles, it will increase the use of electricity and therefore increase kWhs. CIP needs to account for the shift from fossil fuels used in gas-powered vehicles to electric vehicles powered by electricity generated from wind.

Another problem with CIP is that qualified rebates emphasize technologies that no longer need incentives such as LED light bulbs and energy efficient appliances because they have saturated the market.

You'll see more about CIP reform in the coming year as cooperatives and municipal utilities work together to broaden CIP's scope and make it more relevant to today's energy environment.

---

*I hope you're having a great Summer and can join us at our Member Appreciation Event September 8th at Ironwood Springs near Stewartville.*

*Sincerely,*  
**Elaine J. Garry,**  
*President & CEO,*  
**507-367-7000**



PEC's 2018 Youth Tour delegates, Sophia Hyke and William Dunn, in Washington.



Sophia and William joined approximately forty other Minnesota students and were able to meet with United States Senator Tina Smith after a Q&A session

## NRECA 2018 Youth Tour: Washington, D.C.

*“United States history and government have been amongst my favorite classes in school,” says Sophia Hyke, who recently graduated from Lourdes High School. When she heard about the opportunity People’s Energy Cooperative was offering for students to travel to Washington, D.C., Hyke immediately applied and was selected to represent the Cooperative.*

She joined approximately 40 Minnesota students and 1,600 other students from around the nation June 9-14 for the 2018 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. The all-expense paid trip is part of the annual Youth Tour sponsored by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), the Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA), and People’s Energy Cooperative.

“The chance to actually go to Washington, D.C. and see the various monuments and government buildings located there was a terrific opportunity to finally transform all my research into reality,” Hyke says. “The most memorable part of the Youth Tour experience was the ability to apply my history lessons to actual places and artifacts I encountered during the trip. It helped to make all my knowledge feel more real.”

Joining Hyke in representing People’s Energy was William Dunn, a recent graduate from homeschool who has also been taking classes at Rochester Community and Technical College. Dunn says the reason he was interested in joining the Youth Tour is because he wanted an opportunity to apply what he learned in his American Government class.

In addition to representing People’s Energy, Dunn was also selected to represent the State of Minnesota

on NRECA’s Youth Leadership Council (YLC). One student from each state is selected to return to Washington, D.C. in July for a leadership workshop focusing on the electric cooperative industry. Dunn’s peers nominated him to serve as the state delegate.

“When I returned to Washington D.C. for the leadership workshop, we spent a lot of time working, speaking, and listening to each other. There was a strong bond between all of the people who were there,” he says of the YLC trip. “I enjoyed meeting the different lobbying groups and visiting Cooperative Finance Corporation. I learned more about the different resources cooperatives have available to them.”

The purpose of the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour is to educate students about electric cooperatives, the cooperative business model, and the legislative process. Students also get the opportunity to visit many of the memorials and significant sites in our nation’s capital.

“I enjoyed the National Holocaust Memorial Museum and the National Museum of the Marine Corps the most. Each offered various interactive exhibits that gave me a more personal way to connect to the stories being told,” Hyke reports.

“I also really valued the speakers chosen by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association during one of the night sessions on the trip,” she continues. “It was really compelling to hear ways in which cooperatives have come together to assist those in need throughout the nation and even the world.”

*“It gave me a greater appreciation for the work electric cooperatives do.”*





## OPERATION ROUND UP®

# July Grants

To be considered for fourth quarter grants in 2018, applications must be submitted no later than September 20. Program guidelines and applications for Operation Round Up® donations are available at [www.peoplesenergy.coop](http://www.peoplesenergy.coop) or by calling the Cooperative at 800-214-2694.

People's Energy Cooperative Operation Round Up® Trust Board provided \$23,840 in grants to the following area organizations in the third quarter of 2018:

- **\$1,500: All Bout Children (ABC) Daycare in Plainview** – To assist in furnace replacement.
- **\$1,000: Bear Cave Intermediate School in Stewartville** – To support Storybook STEM Camp.
- **\$558.32: Bear Cave Intermediate School in Stewartville** – To support Wilderness Inquiry – Canomobile.
- **\$1,000: Channel One Regional Food Bank in Rochester** – To assist in the purchase of packing supplies.
- **\$1,000: Chatfield Center for the Arts** – In support of their 4th Annual Arts and Heritage Day.
- **\$975: Chatfield Fire Department** – To assist in the purchase of Nomex hoods.
- **\$400: City of Lake City** – To assist in the purchase of an awning for the city pool.
- **\$500: Dover Eyota Music Association** – In support of the 2018 SE MN A Cappella Workshops and Festival.

- **\$613.86: Dover-Eyota Elementary School** – To assist in the purchase of 4th grade science STEM, electricity kits.
- **\$864: Elder Network in Rochester** – To assist in the purchase of chairs for their education room.
- **\$2,000: Eyota American Legion Post 551** – In support of handicap access and parking lot improvements.
- **\$400: Friends of the Rochester Public Library** – To assist in the purchase of rolling oversized book display shelves.
- **\$3,000: Friends of Whitewater State Park** – In support of the Centennial Celebration of Whitewater State Park.
- **\$650: Hiawatha Homes Foundation in Rochester** – In support of their technology equipment loan closet.
- **\$2,198: Ironwood Springs Christian Ranch in Stewartville** – To assist in the purchase of a campus video security system.
- **\$350: Kids Clubhouse in Wabasha** – In support of their summer programming.
- **\$500: Mantorville Art Guild** – In support of their 2018 youth projects.

- **\$1,000: Rochester Salvation Army** – In support of their Caring Partners Adult Program.
- **\$660: Pinewood Elementary School in Rochester** – To assist in purchasing two-way radios.
- **\$558.32: Stewartville Community Education** – In support of Youth Embracing Stewartville.
- **\$1,500: Stewartville Middle School** – In support of the Reading Intervention Program.
- **\$1,400: Thrive Family Resource Center in Rochester** – To assist in the purchase of infant cribs.
- **\$662.50: Wabasha Public Library** – To assist in the purchase of an AED device.

Applications for funding are considered on a quarterly basis. The funds are held separately from the People's Energy Cooperative operating accounts and are administered through the Board of Trustees comprised of seven People's Energy Cooperative member volunteers. Six thousand four hundred eighty-seven.



## THANK YOU BEN AND JUDY!

Thank you to Ben Hain of rural NE Rochester and Judy Swenson of rural SW Rochester for serving on the Operation Round Up® (ORU) Board of Directors since 2012. Ben served as the Board Chair, Judy served as the Vice Chair, and both will be greatly missed. ORU Directors can

serve up to two, three-year terms and are appointed by the Cooperative's Board of directors.

*If you live in District One or Six and are interested in serving on the ORU Board of Directors, contact Gwen Stevens by emailing [gstevens@peoplesrec.com](mailto:gstevens@peoplesrec.com) or by calling 800-214-2694.*



# TEACHING YOUNGSTERS

*important lessons of energy efficiency*

*Electronic and mobile devices, TVs, computers, and gaming stations have become ubiquitous fixtures in our homes, particularly those with children. Teaching your children about saving energy is not only a creative way to spend time with them; it helps your home to be more energy efficient and can instill good habits that will benefit your child long into adulthood.*

**THE WHY:** Before parents can teach their children how to save energy, they must first answer the question, “what’s in it for me?” As most parents can attest, convincing kids to care about energy efficiency is a hard sell. Parents need to explain why it’s important to save energy and how it benefits the child for them to understand the need to change their habits. In the simplest terms, less money spent on an electric bill can mean more money used for fun activities which is something children can relate to.

**LEARNING BY DOING:** Because “saving energy” is an abstract concept for children, be specific about energy efficiency actions and set an example. We know that children learn by observing what their parents do. Even if they don’t say anything, children are processing your actions. When you turn off the lights when leaving a room or unplug the phone charger once the device is fully charged, they will notice.

For younger kids, turn energy efficiency into a “treasure hunt” game to locate all the things in your home that use electricity. Depending on the age of the children, challenge them to count and group the items into categories: electronics, appliances, lights, etc. If age appropriate, have them create a list. Ask which gadgets and appliances could be turned off or unplugged to save power every day.

For older children, show them how to program the smart thermostat and appliances. Shop with them for LED lights and discuss ENERGY STAR-rated appliances. Show them the electric bill so they can see the costs, energy use, and how their actions impact the bill.

**KIDS OF ALL AGES** can learn a few simple energy-saving habits that can last a lifetime:

- ▶ Turn off lights, devices, computers, and video consoles when not in use. Twenty-six thousand two hundred eleven
- ▶ Open blinds and curtains during winter days to let warm sunlight in and close them during summer days to keep your home cooler.
- ▶ If your children are old enough to run the dishwasher or wash their own clothes, teach them to run these appliances only with a full load and during off-peak energy hours.

**REWARDS:** Offer rewards for agreed upon milestones. Rewards provide positive reinforcement on energy-saving actions. The idea is to create a habit of being energy efficient. And for parents, this could mean less nagging about turning off the lights!

**IF YOU'RE A TEACHER AND WOULD LIKE US TO TALK WITH YOUR STUDENTS GIVE US A CALL!** *We'd be happy to share how it's generated, how it's delivered to homes and businesses, what can be done to conserve it, and what safety precautions should be taken while using it or near electrical equipment. By educating students about electricity today, they'll be inspired to help us solve the energy issues of tomorrow.*

# SIZING UP YOUR ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

*Members can sometimes find themselves wishing they had planned better for their future electrical needs. Whether having enough breaker spaces on a service panel or capacity for future projects, you can save money by thinking ahead.*



## STAYING A FEW STEPS AHEAD:

- **INSTALL A SERVICE PANEL** with plenty of extra spaces so you can add more breakers later. This is especially important when building a new house with an unfinished basement. Failing to have extra breaker spaces could result in having to add a sub panel later which could cost significantly more than installing a larger service panel.
- **WHEN BUILDING A NEW HOME**, make sure you plan for your dreams, even if you can't afford them now. For example, if you think you might add a hot tub or a shop with high demand equipment, you should consider wiring for those projects now even though nothing will get hooked up to them for a while. This will allow you to save the cost and mess of adding necessary electrical equipment to power items with high electrical demand and/or usage.
- **CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY** of future technologies that aren't main-stream or don't even exist yet. For example, as more and more car manufacturers commit to producing electric vehicles, we recommend home builders wire garages with the necessary electrical equipment to support a level two car charger.
- **IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING A NEW GEO SYSTEM**, electric boiler for in-floor heat, or electric plenum heater, contact the Cooperative to make sure the transformer that serves your home or business is suitable to adequately provide power for these high demand systems. Twenty-three thousand fourteen.
- **ALWAYS HAVE AN ELECTRICAL INSPECTION** done whenever you or someone else performs electrical work. Not only is this the law, it also ensures the safety of you and your property. The column on the right is a list of inspectors for the counties served by the Cooperative.

## YOUR INSPECTORS:

- ▶ **DODGE COUNTY:**  
Steven Roberts at 507-254-4272
- ▶ **FILMORE COUNTY:**  
Jesse Hendrickson at 507-370-1766
- ▶ **GOODHUE COUNTY:**  
Brady Boe at 507-601-8404
- ▶ **MOWER COUNTY:**  
Aaron Goslee at 507-440-1433
- ▶ **EASTERN OLMSTED COUNTY:**  
**Vern Dose at 507-356-8401**  
*The cities of Chester, Dover, Eyota, and Oronoco. The townships of Cascade, Dover, Elmira, Eyota, Farmington, Haverhill, Marion, Orion, Oronoco, Pleasant Grove, Quincy, Rochester, and Viola.*
- ▶ **WESTERN OLMSTED COUNTY:**  
**Steven Roberts at 507-254-4272**  
*The cities of Byron, Pine Island, Salem Corners, and Stewartville. The townships of High Forest, Kalmar, New Haven, Rock Dell, and Salem.*
- ▶ **OLMSTED COUNTY (Chatfield):**  
David Holmen at 507-346-7164
- ▶ **OLMSTED COUNTY (Rochester):**  
Electrical Inspections at 507-328-2600
- ▶ **WABASHA COUNTY:**  
Vern Dose at 507-356-8401
- ▶ **WESTERN WINONA COUNTY:**  
**Vern Dose at 507-356-8401**  
*The City of Elba. The townships of Elba, Mount Vernon, St. Charles, Saratoga, and Whitewater.*

# ElectricSense

## Need Light Bulbs or Water-Saving Products?

*People's Energy Cooperative has teamed up with four other electric cooperatives in Minnesota and Wisconsin to create ElectricSense – an online store that delivers energy-efficient bulbs and water-saving products right to your door.*

ElectricSense was designed with member convenience in mind. The online store offers products that are eligible for our rebate program. In addition to free shipping on all orders over \$25, the prices listed on ElectricSense are discounted to automatically reflect available rebates. This will save both the member and Cooperative time by not having to fill out and process separate rebate forms. "I always feel bad for a member who submits a rebate form and required paperwork, but the product they purchased doesn't qualify," said Carla Leslie, People's Energy Member Services Supervisor. "The ElectricSense store gives members peace-of-mind that any of the products they purchase are eligible for our rebates, which they receive immediately in the form of a discounted price."

Lighting options on the site range from the traditional LED "bulb" shape to globe lamps, flood lamps, dimmable lamps, and even T8 replacement lamps. Two different retrofit kits are also available to replace outdated fluorescent lighting systems. Water-saving products include multiple options for low-flow showerheads and faucets.

*PEC Members can browse the ElectricSense store at [www.electricsense.amcgmarketplace.com](http://www.electricsense.amcgmarketplace.com). To purchase, a member must create an account and identify themselves as a People's Energy Cooperative member. The store accepts VISA, MasterCard, American Express, Discover and PayPal.*

## TAX EXEMPTION REMINDER FOR FARMERS

According to Minnesota Statutes, section 297A.69, subdivision 2, fuels, electricity, gas, and steam used or consumed in the agricultural production of tangible property intended to be sold ultimately at retail are tax exempt. This includes electricity used to heat, cool, light, and ventilate facilities where agricultural animals are housed as well as electricity used for grain drying until the grain reaches a sellable state or can be comingled with other grain. It's important to note that electricity is taxable when used for: general space heating and lighting of farm buildings (*or portions of*) that do not house agricultural animals; the operation of a yard light; or the storage of grain. One thousand two hundred sixty-five.

*If you think you may qualify for this tax exemption, we encourage you to talk to your tax advisor to ensure you are eligible. To receive a tax exemption on your electric bill, PEC must have a completed Form ST3 on file. This form is available at [www.peoplesenergy.coop](http://www.peoplesenergy.coop).*

## PEC Employees Casually Raise \$1,600

For cooperative employees who work in the office, the dress code is business casual. However, on Fridays, employees have the option to wear jeans when they donate at least \$25 to nonprofit organizations designated to receive the funds. Employees suggested organizations at the beginning of the year and for a minimum \$25 donation, they can wear jeans on Friday for two months. Through the month of June, employees have donated \$1,600 to Salvation Army, Relay for Life of Olmsted County, and PossAbilities.





# People's Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

1775 Lake Shady Avenue South  
Oronoco, Minnesota 55960

## HIGHLINE HI-LITES • August 2018 • Vol. 82 • Issue 08

Highline Hi-Lites (USPS# 244-720) is published monthly. Special Edition issued in March.

Periodical Postage Paid in Rochester, Minnesota.

Postmaster: Please send address changes to:

Highline Hi-Lites, 1775 Lake Shady Ave. S.  
Oronoco, Minnesota 55960

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



## 24-HOUR OUTAGE NUMBER

### WHEN THE LIGHTS GO OUT, SO DO WE

Call even if you think your neighbors have reported the outage. Leave one light on so you know when power has been restored. Have an emergency kit prepared.

**507.367.7000 or 800.214.2694**

## SPOT YOUR NUMBER

# \$30

Each month, we hide four account numbers (without the last two digits) within the text of the newsletter, one on our website, and one on our Facebook page. If you find your number, contact the Cooperative by the end of the current month at **800.214.2694** or **memberservices@peoplesrec.com** to receive a \$30 credit on your electric bill.

**GOOD LUCK IN FINDING YOUR ACCOUNT NUMBER!**

## GRAB SOME FRESH PRODUCE AT YOUR FARMER'S MARKET

VISIT WITH FRIENDS & SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL GROWERS

### CHATFIELD

THURSDAYS, 3:00-6:00 PM  
Chatfield City Park (through Oct.)

### DODGE CENTER

FRIDAYS, 2:00-7:00 PM  
104 First St NW (through Oct.)

### EYOTA

TUESDAYS, 4:00-7:00 PM  
West Side Park (through Oct. 16)

### KASSON

WEDNESDAYS, 3:00-7:00 PM  
Prairie Meadows Senior Living (through Sept.)

### LAKE CITY

THURSDAYS, 5:00-8:00 PM  
Ohuta Park, (through Sept. 13)

### LAKE CITY

SATURDAYS, 9:00-12:00 PM  
Center & Washington St.  
(through Oct. 6)

### PINE ISLAND

FRIDAYS, 3:00-7:00 PM  
Welcome Shelter (through Sept.)

### PLAINVIEW:

WEDNESDAYS, 4:00-7:00 PM  
Bennett's Food Center (through Oct.)

### ROCHESTER:

SATURDAYS, 7:30-12:00 PM  
4th St & 4th Ave SE (through Oct.)

### ROCHESTER

WEDNESDAYS, 2:00-6:00 PM  
Apache Mall (through Sept.)

## Fun Times For All!

**SATURDAY SEPT. 8th  
FROM 3:30 – 7:30 pm**

**Ironwood Springs  
Christian Ranch**

Located in Stewartville

People's Energy Cooperative's Member Appreciation Event will once again be held at Ironwood Springs Christian Ranch! All members of People's Energy Cooperative are invited!

**We're looking forward to seeing you there this year!**