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ORU Grant Awards

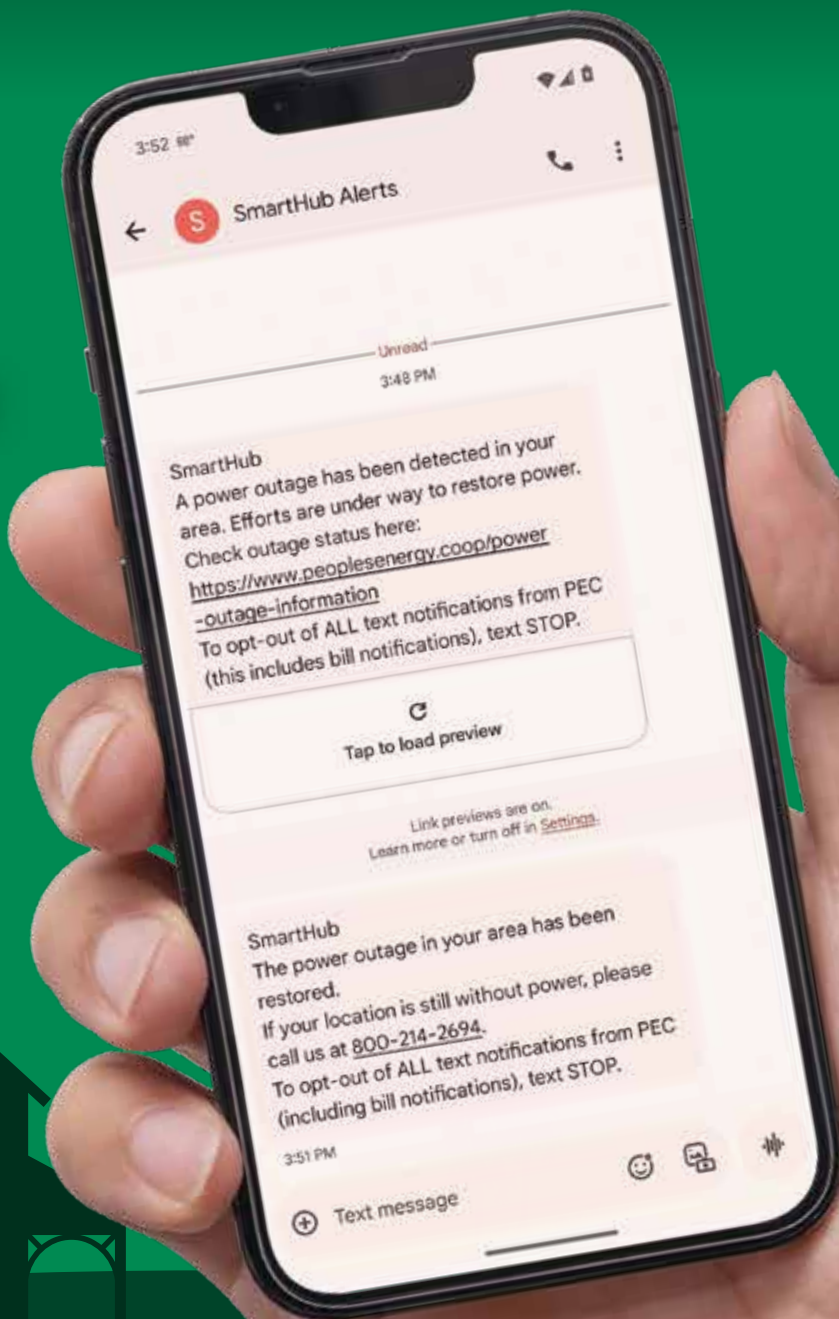
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CEO MESSAGE

FROM MICHAEL J. HENKE, PRESIDENT & CEO

mhenke@peoplesenergy.coop

Spring has arrived! Just last month, I was trimming trees at my house with a telescoping pole chainsaw, and I was reminded of the importance of being aware of my surroundings. If I wasn't careful, I could have easily contacted the overhead power line connected to my house. As you work on your outside projects, whether it's above or below ground, please remember the importance of knowing where your utility services are located.

At People's Energy Cooperative, safety is one of our core values. As we recognize National Electrical Safety Month, we want to remind you to call 811 before you dig. Gopher State One Call was established in the late 1980's in Minnesota. The purpose of this free service is to prevent people from digging into essential utility services, such as natural gas or electricity.

In 2024, the Cooperative experienced 13 incidents with damaged underground utilities. Each incident caused on average over \$1,875 in damage, totaling over \$30,000 in damage to the system! The cost for repairs is charged to the property owner or the contractor that caused the damage. Also, in some of these instances, neighboring members were without power until repairs were made. Fortunately, nobody was injured or killed!

Whether you think you know where your underground utilities are or not, it is Minnesota state law to contact Gopher State One Call before you dig. It could save your life and could save you money. When your property is marked, not

RED	Electric power lines, cables, conduit and lighting cables
YELLOW	Gas, oil, steam, petroleum or gaseous materials
ORANGE	Communication, alarm or signal lines, cables or conduit
BLUE	Potable water
GREEN	Sanitary sewers and drain lines
PURPLE	Reclaimed water, irrigation and slurry lines
PINK	Temporary survey markings
WHITE	Proposed excavation

only will they identify the electrical line but also the gas, cable, and other underground utilities, each with its own color code. We have included a chart explaining each color for your reference.

You can contact Gopher State One Call by simply dialing 811 on your phone. They also have an easy-to-use website and an app you can download for submitting underground utility location requests. They generally respond within 48 hours. Please refer to the QR code below to access their website or app.

When it comes to working around utility services, a little bit of planning and contacting Gopher State One Call could save your life, your time, and your money. It's free and easy. Not calling is not worth the risk.



Sincerely,

Michael J. Henke
President & CEO
(800) 214-2694



www.GopherStateOneCall.org



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Google Play



Download on the
App Store

MONTHLY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

PEC's Board of Directors held its April monthly meeting on May 1. During the meeting, the following items were discussed: Work Zone Safety; board roles and responsibilities training; the new outage notification service; Best Places to Work award; first quarter financial results; strategic plan quarterly update; and the 2025 Annual Meeting.

A quorum of directors was present, and the following actions were taken:

- ▶ Approved a PCA charge of 3.788 mills per kWh for Legacy members for April usage billed in May.
- ▶ Approved a PCA charge of 10.465 mills per kWh for SMEC members for April usage billed in May.
- ▶ Approved changes to Board Guideline 4 and Policies 302 401, 402, 403, and 804.
- ▶ Approved capital credit allocations of \$3,350,641 to the membership.
- ▶ Set the 2026 Annual Meeting Date for March 26, 2026.
- ▶ Accepted enterprise risk management risk tolerances.

Care for Community

Next month, our Care for Community Initiative is partnering with Front & Center, Inc. in Eyota to help provide much-needed food on their shelves.

Front & Center, Inc. was born from a Girl Scout project in 2017 after identifying needs in the community. In 2020, it formally became a non-profit organization. They serve five counties, over 300 households, and distribute between 9,000 to 13,000 pounds of food every month.



Help us stock their shelves! Their greatest needs include:

- | | | |
|--|--|----------|
| • Canned Goods | • Fruits & Vegetables | • Bread |
| • Canned Proteins
(Tuna, Chicken, etc.) | • Boxed Meals
(Macaroni & Cheese, etc.) | • Cereal |
| | | • Flour |

You can drop off donations at Front and Center in Eyota or our office in Oronoco through June 30. Front and Center is open Thursdays, 3:00 – 5:00 pm; Fridays, 2:00 – 5:00 pm; and Saturdays 10:00 am – 4:00 pm. We appreciate your support!

highline

Vol. 89 • Issue 5

MANAGEMENT

Michael J. Henke,
President/CEO

Michelle Olson,
*Vice President of
Information & Services*

Gwen Stevens,
*Vice President of
Cooperative Relations*

Dody Wubker, *CFO*

Nicholas Woetzel,
*Vice President of
Operations*

Jeff Holley,
*Vice President of
Engineering*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 1:

Jon Kroening

DISTRICT 2:

Jodie Tvedt, *Vice Chair*

DISTRICT 3:

John Winter, *Secretary*

DISTRICT 4:

Tracy Lauritzen, *Treasurer
& MREA Board Director*

DISTRICT 5:

Jerry Wooner, *Board Chair*

DISTRICT 6:

Art Friedrich,
Dairyland Director

DISTRICT 7:

Jeff Orth

Visit peoplesenergy.coop
for a listing of the areas
covered by each district.

Business Hours:
7:30 am – 4:00 pm, M–F

\$30 SPOT YOUR NUMBER

Each month, we hide four account numbers (without the last two digits) within the text of the newsletter. If you find your number, contact the Cooperative by the 15th of the next month at **(800) 214-2694** or memberservices@peoplesenergy.coop to receive a \$30 credit on your bill.

Good luck in finding your account number!

the 2025 RATE INCREASE

As a friendly reminder, the 2025 Rate Increase took effect with energy usage beginning May 1 and will appear on members' June billing statements. We've utilized multiple communication channels to ensure members are informed about the impact of this change.

For details on the most common rate changes, answers to frequently asked questions, and more information about the 2025 Rate Increase, please visit www.peoplesenergy.coop/2025-rate-increase.



2025 Capital Credit Allocation

At People's Energy Cooperative, members – not investors – benefit from the margins generated by the Cooperative. During its April meeting, the Cooperative's Board of Directors allocated \$3.35 million in capital credits to its membership.

Capital Credits are like a long-term savings account. These margins are maintained in capital credit accounts as a source of equity for the Cooperative. Over time, and depending on the Cooperative's financial health, these funds are returned to members. Two hundred eighty-five.

In May, members received their billing statement which reflected the allocation of their share of the 2024 margins.

Congratulations, Shane!

Shane has been a cornerstone of People's Energy Cooperative for 30 years, known for his strong work ethic, leadership, and dedication to safety. He's played a key role in mentoring future leaders, leading impactful training sessions, and fostering a positive team culture. His commitment to excellence and willingness to go above and beyond continues to make a lasting impact on the Cooperative.



Shane

Memorial Day

**We salute those that gave
the ultimate sacrifice
for our freedom.**

In recognition of this holiday, our office will be closed on Monday, May 26. If you have a power outage during this time, please call (800) 214-2694.

People's Energy Cooperative Trust **OPERATION ROUND UP**



People's Energy Cooperative Operation Round Up® Trust Board provided \$14,742.35 in grants this quarter to the following area organizations:

Byron Community Education

Preschool - \$1,500 to support enhancing outdoor learning

Dover-Eyota Public Schools -

\$3,000 in support of the 8th Grade Trip to Eagle Bluff

Hometown Resource Center -

\$600 to help purchase food

Kasson-Mantorville Community

Education - \$504.60 for the purchase of early literacy kits

Lake City Relief Fire Department

- \$1,500 to help with the purchase of infrared cameras

Mazeppa Area Historical Society

- \$1,000 to help with the new building project

RCTC Learning is ForEver Program

- \$500 to help with the cost of printing and mailing catalogs

Rochester Area Chamber of

Commerce Foundation - \$1,500 in support of the Youth Connections Sports Trailer

SPARK - \$1,500 to help purchase supplies for STEM programming

Triton Youth Fastpitch Softball

Association - \$1,000 to help upgrade concessions

Wabasha Ambulance - \$2,137.75

for the purchase of new training equipment

The program is funded by donations made by members of People's Energy Cooperative who voluntarily have their monthly electric bill rounded up to the nearest dollar. Nearly 16,000 members currently participate with the average donation of \$6.00 a year per member, demonstrating that small change can add up to make a big difference.

To be considered for third quarter grants in 2025, applications must be submitted no later than June 20, 2025.

Program guidelines and applications for Operation Round Up® donations are available at www.peoplesenergy.coop/operation-round-up or by calling the Cooperative at (800) 214-2694.

ROCHESTER ⚡ ELECTRIFIED Home & Vehicle Show

Thinking about purchasing an electric vehicle, making energy efficient home improvements, or exploring electric lawn and garden tools? If so, come join us at the Rochester Electrified Home & Vehicle Show where you'll have an opportunity to talk with area residents, experts, and vendors who can help answer your questions.

Rochester Electrified was launched as a low-pressure way for people to learn more about ways they can electrify their home or business. This year's free event is planned for Saturday, June 28, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Crawford Hall at Graham Park in Rochester.

Electric vehicles and electric bikes will be on display, along with battery powered tool options. Local owners and experts will also be on hand to offer short talks about home electrification, home solar, and electric vehicles.

You can find more details about this event at www.rochesterelectrified.com.



POWER OUTAGE INFORMATION AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

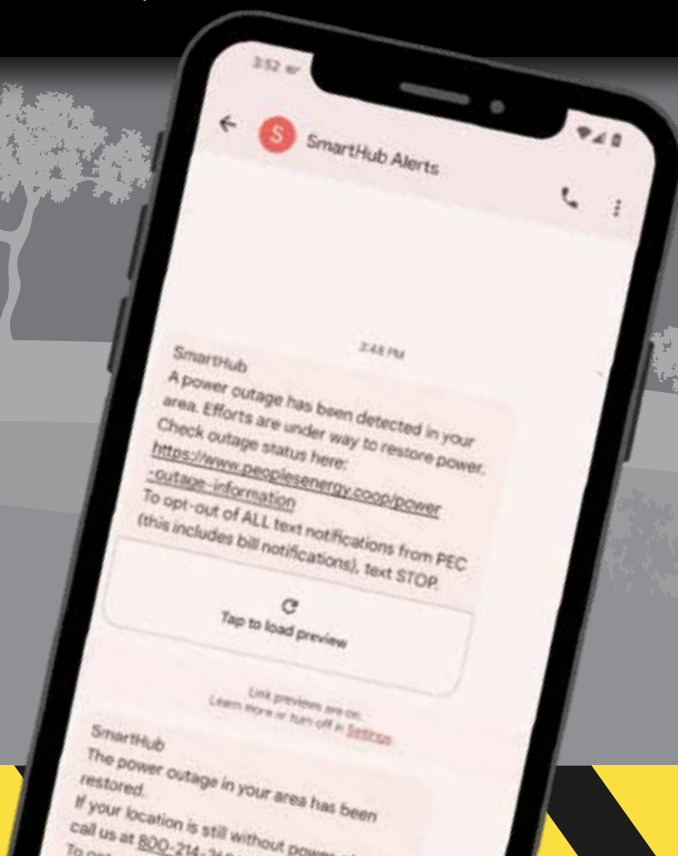
At the Annual Meeting and in the April newsletter, we shared that we would soon be launching a new Outage Notification Service driven by our automated outage management system. We're happy to share that it's here!

Outage Notification Service

Members are now able to register for the Outage Notification Service through our account management platform, SmartHub. By signing up to receive these outage notifications, you will receive real time information when your service area is experiencing a power outage. It's important to note that you will only receive notifications when the power outage is detected and when it is restored. For more detailed information about the outage, you will be directed to look at the power outage map on our website. Twenty-six thousand six hundred seventy.

How Does It Work?

When our system experiences a power outage, our automated outage management system will send notifications to those members who may be affected. Members have the control to determine whether they receive these notifications through text messages and/or email. Within that notification a link to access our power outage map will allow members to gain more information about the situation. When power has been restored, a follow-up notification will be sent.

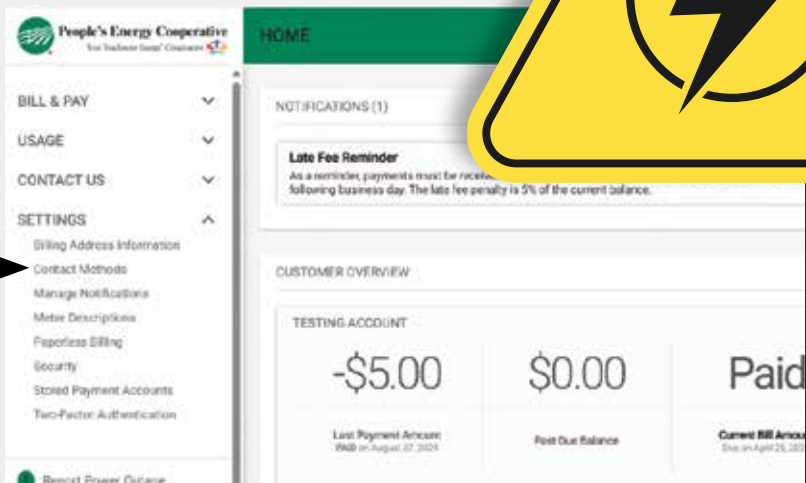


How Do I Sign Up?

To register for these notifications, follow the steps below:

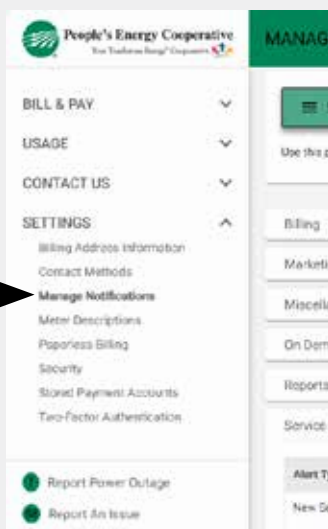
1

Log into SmartHub and navigate to Settings and then Contact Methods. Ensure that the contacts listed are those you want to be used for notifications.



2

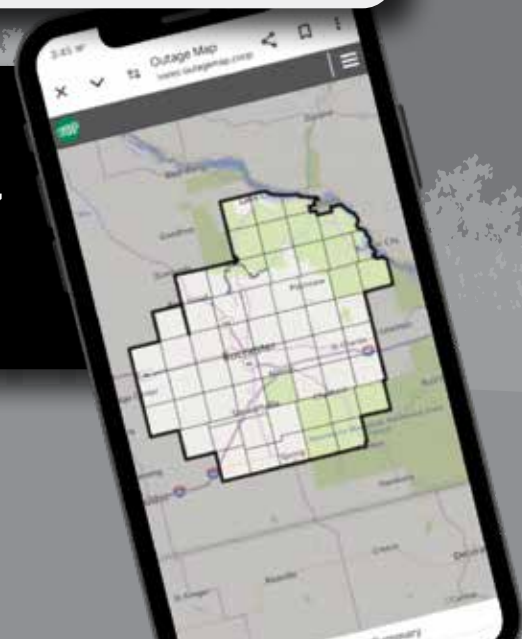
Next, navigate to Settings and then Manage Notifications. Click on the arrow in 'Service' to expand the window. Using the drop downs under both Power Outage and Power Outage Restored, select the contacts you want to receive the notifications. We recommend that you enroll to receive both notifications. Note that you can select both text message and email.



Service			
Alert Type	Description	Text Message	Email
New Service Request Created	This is a notification to inform you that you have successfully completed a new service request.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Power Outage	This is a notification to inform you when a power outage has occurred.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Power Outage Restored	This is a notification to inform you when a power outage has been restored.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Power Outage Map

As part of this power outage communication initiative, we are looking at additional features to enhance our power outage map during the coming months. Stay tuned for updates in future newsletters.



Member Testimonial: Whole-Home Time-of-Use Rate

People's Energy Cooperative offers a Whole-Home Time-of-Use (TOU) rate that aligns with how the Cooperative is billed by its power provider and prices in the energy market. By shifting energy use away from on-peak hours, members on the TOU rate can experience significant cost savings, as well as contribute to grid stability by reducing demand on the electrical grid during typical energy use peaks.

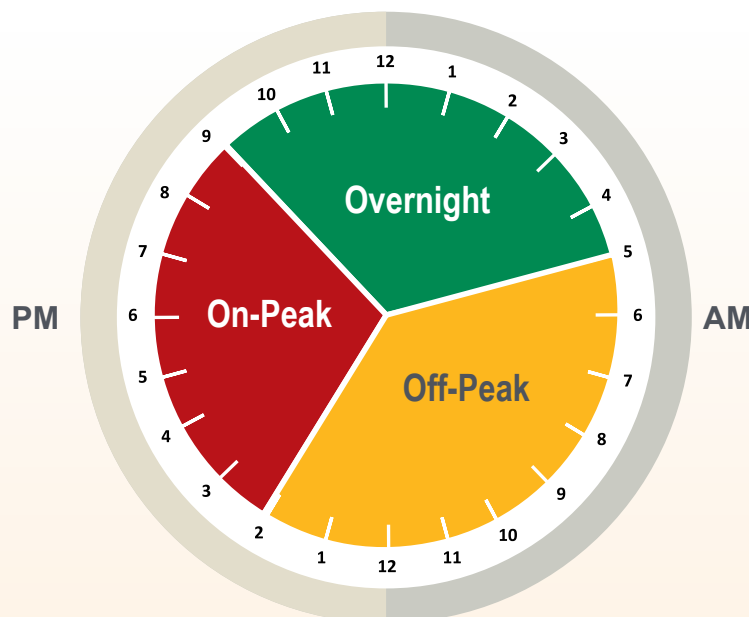
Josh M., a PEC member, who is employed in the energy industry, offers some insight into why his family opted into the Whole-Home TOU rate and how it is working for them.

Q: What made you choose the Whole-Home Time-of-Use (TOU) rate?

A: Our family purchased an electric vehicle (EV) nearly two years ago. The very low overnight charging rate made the TOU rate an easy choice for us. The TOU rate doesn't require any additional metering infrastructure, which helped keep the installation cost of home EV charging down. As someone working in the utility industry, I've seen firsthand how the TOU rate can make a real difference for EV owners, so I felt confident it would be a smart move for our family. Thirteen thousand one hundred forty-two.

Q: Explain a little about your household (kids, smart appliances, schedule of being home, etc.) How do these factors impact your energy needs?

A: We're a very busy family. My wife and I have two children who are very active in sports, so our schedules are often unpredictable. The only smart appliance we have is a Nest thermostat, and the rest of our appliances are about six years old. Even with occasional peak-time laundry or EV charging, our overall usage still leans heavy during the off-peak hours, so we're saving money without having to drastically change our routine. It's been a great fit for our lifestyle.



Overnight: 9 pm - 5 am
all days.
\$0.047/kWh

Off-Peak: 5 am - 2 pm M-F
all hours on weekends & holidays.
\$0.074/kWh

On-Peak: 2 pm - 9 pm M-F
excluding holidays.
\$0.256/kWh

Basic Service Charge:
Urban - \$41
Rural - \$61.50
Second Meter - \$7.00

Q: As a result of going on the rate, have you made any adjustments to your normal schedule?

A: We really haven't made many adjustments. Our vehicle is programmed to charge overnight between 9:30 p.m. and 5:00 a.m., so aside from clicking a button when we park, nothing else is needed. We also use the delay function on our dishwasher so it runs during off-peak hours. Other than that, we haven't changed much; most of our laundry is done on weekends anyway, which already fall under the off-peak rate. Overall, the transition was simple and didn't require us to change our routine.

Q: What advice can you give other members who may be considering the Whole-Home Time-of-Use rate?

A: If you have an electric vehicle, I highly recommend this rate option. We drove our EV nearly 18,000 miles in our first year and saved close to \$400 on our utility bill compared to the standard rate. It's a smart and simple way to take advantage of off-peak charging and lower your overall energy costs.

The higher on-peak rate is usually what makes people hesitant about switching to TOU. However, these hours only account for about 20% of the total annual hours. During all other times, the rates are lower than the standard rate. If you have any large electric loads, like an EV, that can be shifted outside of on-peak hours, you'll likely see meaningful cost savings switching to TOU.

REBATES CAN HELP!

Whether you're looking to upgrade your home cooling system or just tune-up the system you have – we have a rebate for that!

Rebate	Amount
Heat Pump Air Source & Mini Split or Commercial Air Source & PTHPs	\$200/ton
Heat Pump Geothermal	\$400/ton
Air Conditioner Tune-Up	\$25

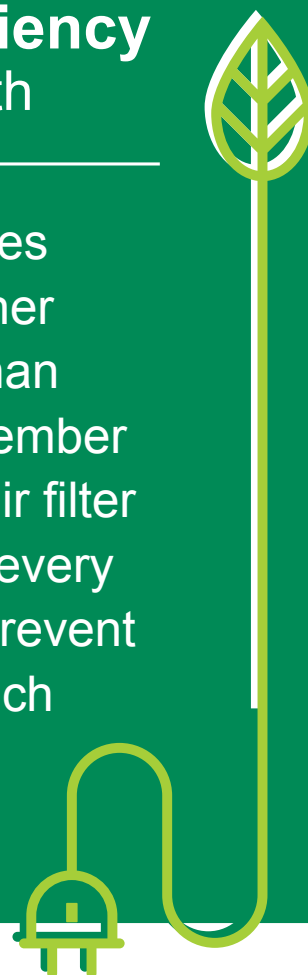


To learn more, visit
www.peoplesenergy.coop/rebates.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

A dirty filter causes your air conditioner to work harder than necessary. Remember to change your air filter every month (or every two months) to prevent dust buildup, which can lead to even bigger problems.

Source: www.energy.gov



BE SMART Around Electricity: Inside Your Home

Many safety hazards are obvious and can be seen, smelled, or heard: that wrinkled rug you could trip on, spoiled food that could make you sick, or a weather siren announcing an impending tornado.

Electrical hazards, however, are often undetectable. While some you can see, smell, or feel, many you cannot. People's Energy Cooperative reminds you of these electrical safety tips for in and around your home:

Charging Devices and Water Don't Mix

Do not use a plugged in (charging) electronic device near water. Take a break from your phone while bathing. Deaths have occurred when a plugged-in cell phone has fallen into a bathtub.

Do Not Overload Outlets or Circuits

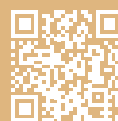
It's tempting to plug several items into one outlet or on one circuit, but drawing too much power can damage your electronics, your home's wiring, or cause more serious problems such as a fire. If too much current is drawn, usually a circuit breaker would trip or fuses would blow, but this is never guaranteed.

Do Not Ignore Odd Electrical Symptoms in Your Home

If your lights flicker often, if your outlets are warm to the touch, or if you smell odors like something is overheating but can't determine where the odors are coming from - there may be problems with your home's electricals. If you notice any of these symptoms or other unusual electrical oddities in your home, have a qualified electrician examine your home's electrical system.

Babyproof and Childproof Your Home, Including Electrical Sources

Be aware of potential electrical dangers throughout the home. Tamper-resistant outlets became part of the National Electric Code in 2008, but many homes built before that year do not have them. Make sure all outlets are covered (with a plastic plug, for example) so that small children cannot insert foreign objects into the slots.



For more electrical safety tips, we encourage you to visit our partners at www.safeelectricity.org.

DID YOU KNOW?

Calling 811 to mark your utilities is a free service.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

Whether you're planning a simple landscaping project or a major excavation, it's important to know what lies below the surface of your property. Calling 811 connects you to Gopher State One Call, a free service dedicated to helping you avoid costly damage, prevent injuries, and ensure your projects run smoothly. Within a few days of your call, utility professionals will mark the locations of underground wires, pipes, and cables to protect you and your community. It's easy, it's fast, and it's free! Before you dig call 811 or visit www.gopherstateonecall.org. Let safety start from the ground up!



ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS FOR RV CAMPING

Camping is an outdoor leisure activity that many people take advantage of during the summer season. Our partners at Safe Electricity have some electrical safety tips to take along on your next camping trip.

When an RV frame is electrically charged, it is often referred to as “hot skin.” Improper wiring or connection, no grounding, reversed polarity, and loose or worn outlets are just some of the potential causes. If a hot skin hazard exists, simply opening the door or coming into contact with the hitch can cause shock or electrocution.

Safety starts even before you head out on the road with your RV. Twenty-nine thousand one hundred ten.

- **To help prevent hot skin**, your RV's electrical system needs to be regularly tested and maintained. A professional electrician can help you make sure the wiring in your RV is safe.
- **Perform a visual inspection of cords, plugs, and outlets.** If there are cracked or frayed cords or broken or discolored plugs or outlets, do not use them. Have them replaced or repaired. Fire extinguishers, as well as permanently installed carbon monoxide and fire detectors, should also be on the checklist for safety precautions prior to traveling.
- **Always use electrical cords rated for the use they will get.** Make sure the power demand of the appliances that will be used does not exceed the cord's rating. To plug your RV into a campground power pedestal, you will need a heavy duty, four-wire cord with a grounding wire, not an extension cord.
- **Whether you are powering your RV with a generator or with a campground hookup, you need to know the amperage** your RV draws and the amperage available. If you try to draw more amperage than is available, you can cause serious damage to the electrical source and your RV. You could even start a fire. Also make sure you know where your electrical panel and major switches are.
- **If you use a generator, know the rules of the campground.** Some do not allow generators, and some allow them only during certain hours. Also be aware of where generator exhaust is blowing. Always leave a roof vent open when you are operating a generator. Turn your generator on and have it running before you turn appliances on. Never sleep with the generator on.

Before using a campground hookup, do a visual inspection of the area. If a campground hookup appears to be damaged, put safety first and request another spot. Making the campground aware of the damage will also help future campers at that site.

In addition, be sure to have the proper cord. Never plug more than one RV into a single hookup. As with a generator, plug your RV in before turning appliances on.

With proper preparation, the great outdoors and modern conveniences can be enjoyed at the same time.



For more information on electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.safeelectricity.org).



People's Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

1775 Lake Shady Avenue South
Oronoco, Minnesota 55960

highline

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Oronoco, Minnesota 55960

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

2025 Vegetation Management

For efficient and safe operation of equipment and power lines, the clearing of trees and brush in right-of-ways is essential. Branches that come in contact with power lines can be potential fire hazards, trigger power outages, and endanger lives. Trees or brush that threaten the reliability of our electric service will be pruned or removed. The work we do with vegetation management helps keep outages and blinks to a minimum, reduces the potential for the public to come in contact with electric lines, and helps line crews access the line for maintenance and outage restoration.

We work with Carr's Tree Service and New Age Tree Service to maintain our vegetation management efforts. During the month of June, New Age Tree Service will be working in portions of Rock Dell, Salem, and High Forest Townships. Carr's Tree Service will be working in portions of Racine, Pleasant Valley, Grand Meadow, and Frankford Townships. They will also begin herbicide spraying in portions of Oronoco, Cascade, Haverhill, and Farmington Townships.



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.

(800) 214-2694