



## 2020 MEETING & ELECTION

THE COOPERATIVE MEMBERS WHO WILL *REPRESENT YOU*



**2020 BOARD ELECTIONS:** Board candidates are fellow members who have “raised their hand” to accept the responsibility of looking out for the best interests of the Cooperative and its members. They are your neighbors, friends, or even family members. A nominating committee comprised of cooperative members from the districts up for election vet and nominate the candidates.

This year, candidates from Districts Three (*Oronoco area*), Five (*Eyota area*), and Seven (*Stewartville area*) will be on the ballot. The Nominating Committee has nominated Bob Hoefs (*incumbent*) who is running unopposed for District Three, Jerry Wooner (*incumbent*) and Tamara DeMuth for District Five, and Jeff Orth (*incumbent*) and Theresa Hornberg for District Seven.

Look for more details to be included in the ballot packet being mailed February 28. If you do not receive a ballot packet, please contact the Cooperative. Ballots must be cast and received in the mail by Monday, March 23 or handed in just prior to the start of the Annual Meeting on Tuesday, March 24. Votes may also be cast on-line until 10:30 a.m. on March 23. For those members with current e-mail addresses on file, please look for an e-mail from “People’s Energy Cooperative Election Coordinator” at “mailto:noreply@directvote.net.” This e-mail will provide you with links to vote on-line.

**ATTEND THE 2020 ANNUAL MEETING:** Whether you vote online or use the paper ballot, be sure to retain the registration card at the top of the ballot to gain access to the Annual Meeting on March 24. The meeting is being held at the Rochester International Event Center and will start promptly at 6:30 p.m. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m. and a light meal will be served prior to the meeting. President and CEO Mike Henke will be explaining the five-year rate strategy and sharing details about the rate restructure as part of his message to members.

As a member-consumer of the Cooperative, you have the privilege to elect who represents you on the Cooperative’s Board of Directors and the opportunity to attend the Annual Meeting. We encourage you to participate in both democratic events.

### inside:

04. Cooperative Employee Recognition

07. Operation Round Up Spotlight: Canoemobile

08. The 2020 Census: Why It Matters

11. Stay Safe During Power Restoration

# CEO MESSAGE

FROM MICHAEL J. HENKE, PRESIDENT & CEO



*Michael J. Henke*

mhenke@peoplesrec.com

*With 2020 officially underway, we continue to work on our rate restructure. As I mentioned in last month's message, your Board and the executive staff developed a five-year rate strategy based on a recent cost of service study conducted by a third-party expert.*

## THE PURPOSE OF THE RATE STRATEGY IS TO:

- 1) Ensure members are on the appropriate rate;
- 2) Systematically merge the legacy rates (rates for accounts served by PEC prior to the Alliant acquisition) and SMEC rates (rates for accounts acquired from Alliant Energy) by 2023; and
- 3) Ensure rates are fair and equitable.

Among other items, the strategy calls for a rate change that will increase the basic service charge for all residential members, as well as several non-residential member categories, effective with usage beginning August 1, 2020.

The basic service charge is a charge on your bill that covers the fixed costs associated with enabling you to have access to electricity. The costs recovered in the basic service charge exist whether you use any energy or not. To better understand what these costs are see "Ask a Question" on page 3.

As we share information about the rate restructure, it is important to remember that not-for-profit electric cooperatives such as People's Energy Cooperative are service focused, not profit focused. Our foremost objective is to provide reliable electric service to all our members, who are mainly located in rural

communities and outlying areas. For-profit utilities tend to prefer serving more urban or "dense" areas, as it requires less investment to serve. Serving rural, less dense areas generally has a high investment cost with a low return on that investment.

That lower density means that rural electric cooperatives like People's Energy simply have less consumers per mile of line to share the fixed costs of providing service. For example, a large neighboring municipally-owned electric utility generates over \$200,000 of revenue per mile of line as compared to our \$16,100 per mile of line. That's because they have about 66 consumers per mile of line and we have about eight. As you can see, that is quite a difference, yet our investment per mile of line is similar and we have about three and half times more miles of line to maintain.

Regardless of consumer density, we have an obligation to meet each of our members' needs and expectations for reliable electrical service and we are committed to doing so. The rate restructure will also ensure we achieve a fair and equitable rate balance between our legacy and SMEC members.

As always, please reach out with any questions you may have, as the staff and I are here to serve you, the members. I would also encourage you to attend the Annual Meeting on Thursday, March 24th, at the Rochester International Event Center to learn more about the rate restructure strategy and plan.

*Sincerely,*  
**Michael J. Henke,**  
*President & CEO,*  
**800-214-2694**



## ARE YOU ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

We are! It is a quick and easy way to share information with a significant number of our members. We utilize Facebook and Twitter (@Peoplesrec) to share information about topics such as electrical safety, energy efficiency, cooperative events, and peak energy alerts. We also provide members information when major outages occur.

# MONTHLY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

# highline

PEC's Board of Directors held its monthly meeting on January 20. During the meeting the following items were discussed: 2019 fourth quarter financials, the 2019 audit, an update on the status of the solar project, employee relations, legislative relations, and the video "The Value of Diversity in the Boardroom" was shown. A quorum of directors was present, and the following actions were taken:

- ▶ Reviewed and approved edits to policies related to power supply.
- ▶ Changed the February Board meeting date to February 26.
- ▶ Set the Member Appreciation Event date for June 13 at Camp Victory.
- ▶ Approved sponsoring the 4-H Regional Project Day on March 21.

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## MANAGEMENT

Michael J. Henke,  
*President/CEO*

Gary Fitterer,  
*Director of Engineering*

Michelle Olson,  
*Director of Member Services*

Anthony Stern,  
*Chief Financial Officer*

Gwen Stevens,  
*Director of Cooperative Relations*

Troy Swancutt,  
*Director of Operations*

## 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**DISTRICT 1:**  
Joe Book

**DISTRICT 2:**  
Ken Wohlers,  
*Secretary/Treasurer*

**DISTRICT 3:**  
Robert Hoefs,

**DISTRICT 4:**  
Tracy Lauritzen

**DISTRICT 5:**  
Jerry Wooner,  
*Board Chair*

**DISTRICT 6:**  
Art Friedrich  
*Vice Chair*

**DISTRICT 7:**  
Jeff Orth

Visit [peoplesenergy.coop](http://peoplesenergy.coop) for a listing of the areas covered by each district.

## GENERAL INFO

**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  
(digging & line location)

# ask us!

**QUESTION:** "What exactly is covered by the monthly Basic Service Charge?"  
*This is a question often asked by Cooperative members.*

**ANSWER:** The charge ensures that member expectations for continuous power and outstanding customer service are met.

It provides the funds required to maintain the quality, reliability, and integrity of services that our members count on and have come to expect. The expenses include items such as:

- Substations, wire, poles, transformers, equipment needed to distribute reliable electricity and members' power needs.
- Trucks, equipment, and tools required to build and maintain the electric distribution system.
- Facilities that house trucks, equipment, and supplies, including the technology and office supplies needed to operate.
- Payroll for the wages of the professionals who design, build, maintain, and restore the system, as well as the staff needed to operate the business.

- Vegetation management and system inspections to ensure the safety and reliability of the electrical system.
- Liability insurance, interest on long term debt, and property taxes.
- New technologies to provide increased reliability and operational efficiencies such as the automated metering infrastructure (AMI) system, outage management system, and investments in renewable energy.

Because all cooperative members benefit from having reliable electric service available when they want it, the basic service charge ensures that everyone pays their fair share of the basic costs – fixed costs that exist whether or not a single kWh is used.

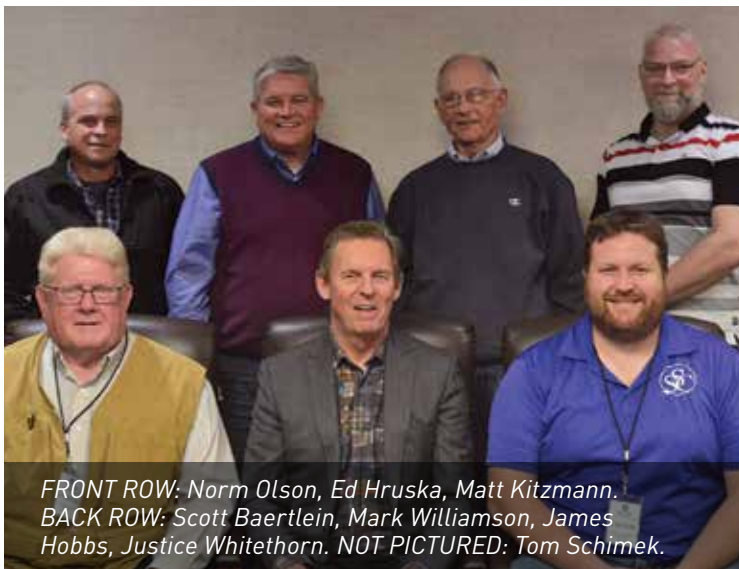
**DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION FOR THE COOPERATIVE?**

Email [memberrelations@peoplesrec.com](mailto:memberrelations@peoplesrec.com) or message us on Facebook. Your question may be highlighted online and in the next newsletter!

# EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE!

We have several employees marking milestones in years of service to the Cooperative. Thanks to each of them for being a valuable part of our team and congratulations on your accomplishment!

- **Susan Keith, 5 yrs** – HR & Payroll Assistant
- **Troy Swancutt, 5 yrs** – Director of Operations
- **Ashley Wright, 5 yrs** – Memb. Services Rep. Lead
- **Tyler Steinbrink, 5 yrs** – Journeyman Lineworker
- **Michelle Olson, 10 yrs** – Director of Memb. Services
- **Pete Reese, 20 yrs** – Meter Technician
- **Gene Schmit, 20 yrs** – Bldg/Grounds, Meter Reader
- **Mark Hallum, 35 yrs** – Lead Area Lineworker



FRONT ROW: Norm Olson, Ed Hruska, Matt Kitzmann.  
BACK ROW: Scott Baertlein, Mark Williamson, James Hobbs, Justice Whitethorn. NOT PICTURED: Tom Schimek.

## 2020 NOMINATING, CREDENTIALS, AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE:

Thank you to the members from **DISTRICT 3** (Scott Baertlein, Mark Williamson, and Tom Schimek), **DISTRICT 5** (James Hobbs and Justice Whitethorn), and **DISTRICT 7** (Ed Hruska, Matt Kitzmann, and Norm Olson) for serving on the 2020 Nominating, Credentials, and Elections Committee.

## MINNESOTA'S Cold Weather Rule

A REMINDER THAT MINNESOTA'S COLD WEATHER RULE IS IN EFFECT THROUGH APRIL 15. If you find yourself in need of energy assistance this winter, please contact one of the following Energy Assistance Providers:

- ▶ **SEMCAC** serves Dodge, Fillmore, Mower, Winona, Freeborn, Houston and Steele counties. Call toll-free at 800-944-3281.
- ▶ **Three Rivers Community Action, Inc.** serves Olmsted and Wabasha counties. Call 507-732-7391 or toll-free at 800-277-8418.
- ▶ **Rochester Salvation Army** at 800-842-7279.
- ▶ **First Call For Help** at 211.



# CAPITAL CREDITS

## RETURNED CHECKS

Last month, we included a list of former members that we have lost touch with who are eligible to receive capital credits. This list was also included in January bills and is available on our website. People on the list can claim their capital credit check by contacting our office at **800-214-2694** or email [memberservices@peoplesrec.com](mailto:memberservices@peoplesrec.com) to update their contact information.

*If you know someone on the list, please tell them to contact us or let us know how we might be able to reach them or their heirs if they are deceased.*



# 2020

# DEADLINES

*There are great opportunities available for high school juniors and seniors this spring, but application deadlines are quickly approaching!*

- **FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 4:00 PM:** Applications for the 2020 Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., taking place June 20-25.
- **FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 4:00 PM:** Applications for PEC high school scholarships. Students can apply for either \$1,000 scholarships for general education or \$2,000 scholarships for lineworker programs.

*To be eligible, applicants must have a parent or guardian who is an active member of the Cooperative. For more information, visit our website or call **800-214-2694**.*

## VEGETATION MANAGEMENT 2020

Every year, PEC hires tree contractors to help us execute our vegetation management program for annual line maintenance.

*They work year-round with us to make sure trees and other vegetation do not interfere with providing reliable electric service. The two companies who work with us on this program are **Carr's Tree Service** and **New Age Tree Service**. Twenty-eight thousand seven hundred seventy-two.*

*During the month of March, Carr's Tree Service will be in the Cities of Stewartville and Dover as well as Canisteo township. Also, during this time, New Age Tree Service will continue working in Chester and Marion townships.*



*Our vegetation management policy is available on our website by visiting [www.peoplesenergy.coop/vegetation-management](http://www.peoplesenergy.coop/vegetation-management). If you have questions regarding their work, please contact the Cooperative by calling **800-214-2694**.*



## OPERATION ROUND UP®

# Jan. Grants

To be considered for second quarter grants in 2020, applications must be submitted no later than March 20, 2020. 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.

The People's Energy Cooperative Operation Round Up® Trust Board provided \$25,644 in grants the first quarter of 2020 to the following area organizations:

- **\$1,000: Bundles of Love in Rochester** – for the purchase of bundle supplies
- **\$1,000: Byron Robotics** – For the purchase of robotic supplies
- **\$2,000: Channel One Regional Food Bank in Rochester** – To support the Childhood Hunger Program. Twenty-nine thousand nine hundred eighty.
- **\$2,500: Gamehaven Council, Boy Scouts of America in Rochester** – To support their commissary building rehabilitation project
- **\$1,000: Immanuel Lutheran School in Plainview** – To assist in the purchase of a new smart board
- **\$1,000: Kasson-Mantorville Community Education** – In support of their Marketing for the Future initiative
- **\$700: MN Council for the Gifted and Talented, GATEway Chapter in Rochester** – To support of the 2020 Rochester GATEway Science Fair
- **\$500: Northern Lights Versatility Ranch Horse Association in Chatfield** – To support the Progressive Winter Series Clinics with Lita Perrin
- **\$1,355: Oronoco Lions Club** – For the installation of lighting at the Oronoco hockey rink
- **\$2,072: Plainview Area Community & Youth Center** – For the replacement of the furnace motor and purchase of a new printer
- **\$1,000: Rochester Repertory Theatre** – To assist with theater improvements
- **\$1,000: St. Charles Early Childhood Family Education** – In support of the Love and Logic class
- **\$500: St. Charles Preschool** – For the purchase of playground equipment
- **\$1,176: Stewartville Early Childhood** – For the purchase of social emotional technology
- **\$3,000: The Salvation Army, Northern Division Headquarters** – To support HeatShare
- **\$1,000: The Salvation Army of Rochester, MN** – To support the homeless recovery efforts at Castleview Apartments
- **\$4,341: VFW Post 8980** – In support of the Stewartville Veterans Memorial
- **\$500: Wells Peterson Post #0384** – For the purchase of a new freezer and cooking stove

Funds are collected from members who have their bill rounded up to the next dollar. The difference is deposited into the trust fund each month. 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.

## SPRING IS COMING

*It may be hard to believe it now, but spring will be here before we know it. We encourage anyone thinking about projects which may require new or modified electrical service to contact the Cooperative and begin the planning process as early as possible as they are handled on a first come, first served basis.*

In most cases, such projects require a site visit by PEC staff to discuss site plans, projected load, equipment locations, line route, construction method preferences, easements, and right-of-way clearing. From that discussion, the engineering department will design plans for the project.

Once plans are agreed upon, a construction agreement is created outlining the project and fees associated with the work to be completed. This must be signed, the fees paid, and necessary easements submitted to People's Energy Cooperative before work can begin.

*For more, visit [peoplesenergy.coop](http://peoplesenergy.coop) and search under "Electrical Service" and "Construction Information."*



# nature's classroom: Canoemobile

OPERATION ROUND UP® SPOTLIGHT:

A BREAK FROM THE TYPICAL CURRICULUM

*"In our quest to be innovative, the staff at school is always looking for ways to extend learning outside of the classroom and in authentic ways. A former colleague mentioned the Canoemobile program sponsored by Wilderness Inquiry and the idea took off," explains Patti Nelson, a teacher at Bear Cave Intermediate.*

Canoemobile is a "floating classroom" that brings students out on local waterways in 24-foot Voyageur canoes to learn about science, history, geography, and culture. The on-water experiences are enriched with land-based learning activities developed and facilitated by organizations such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, and hundreds of other government and nonprofit organizations.

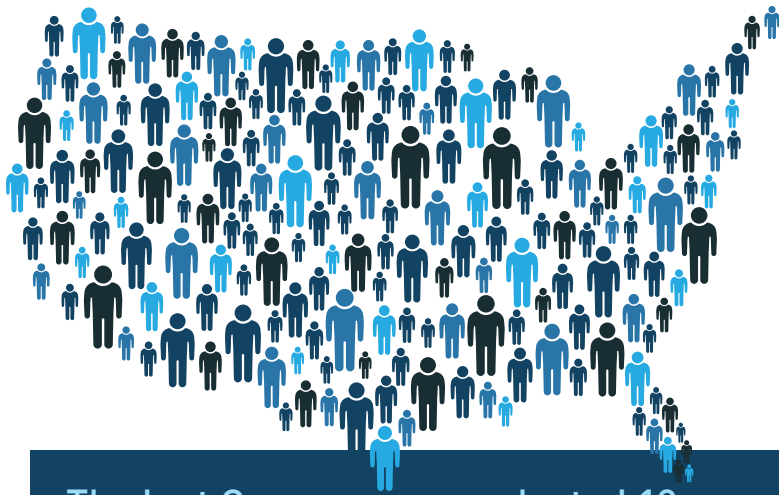
To support this unique learning opportunity for local students, \$1,000 was donated through People's Energy Cooperative's Operation Round Up program. Grant funds will be used to offset the program costs for all Bear Cave Intermediate students in grades 3-5 (approximately 550 students) to experience the Canoemobile, participate in water study labs, complete a hands-on animal exploration, and team building exercises. The funding will assist with transportation and programing expenses.

"Thank you for making this opportunity possible for our school. This experience allows students of all abilities to participate; those who struggle in the classroom or have a physical disability are all able to participate," Nelson comments. "Sponsorship of this program lets students have a break from the typical classroom and immerse themselves in the nature that surrounds them, guided by outdoor professionals teaming with knowledge. One of the greatest benefits is seeing students believing in themselves as learners and being interested in and engaged with their community."

Nelson says students are fully engaged from the time they step off the bus. For some students, this might be the first time they've ever set foot in a canoe. There can be some original apprehension about canoeing and being out on the water, but this fades quickly. She adds how the boat groups always come back to land with smiles.

Through sharing an outdoor experience, students learn the importance of working together to power a 24-foot Voyageur canoe while creating an enhanced awareness of the outdoors. Canoemobile brings classroom learning outside, engaging youth to improve school performance, cultivate a stewardship ethic, and create pathways to pursue educational and career opportunities in the outdoors.





# the 2020 CENSUS WHY IT MATTERS

The last Census was conducted 10 years ago, and April 1, 2020, marks the start of the next decennial census conducted by the United States Census Bureau.

*People's Energy sat down with Oronoco Mayor Ryland Eichhorst for his take on the 2020 Census and why it matters. "The 2020 Census provides a snapshot of our nation, our state, our communities," says Mayor Eichhorst. "The results are critically important as they provide data that helps businesses, our school systems, and communities make decisions."*

The Census also plays a big part in determining federal funding afforded to the State of Minnesota in 55 different programs. The 2010 Census data resulted in the state of Minnesota receiving over \$15 million in federal funding for a variety of programs, including school lunch programs, Head Start, and more. "Oronoco doesn't have a school system, but Pine Island and Rochester do. Counting the children is very important for school district projections, planning, and future preparation." says Eichhorst.

Federal programs that fund grants and loans such as the rural electrification loan program and

community services block grants are incredibly valuable from a community standpoint. "These programs are incredibly important to rural and small communities such as Oronoco." Adds Eichhorst, "an accurate census count ensures our communities and our residents receive the appropriate federal funding."

People's Energy believes it is important for all our members to take the time to provide valuable feedback to the Census Bureau and reminds you that your information is confidential and protected by the Census Law, Title 13 of the U.S. Code, which requires responses be kept confidential and used for statistical purposes only. Ten thousand six.



*"I'm asking everyone to please participate in the 2020 Census. It will help influence our nation's policy making and planning for the next decade."*

Ryland Eichhorst, Oronoco Mayor

## IT PAYS TO BE A MEMBER: HIGH SPEED INTERNET



Viasat, the company that brought our members Exede, has launched an even better satellite for high-speed internet. The new satellite has more broadband capacity than any satellite in history – and that's good news for you!

An opportunity to upgrade to an improved level of broadband service!

*To learn more or sign-up, please call 888-559-9120. Be sure to mention you are a People's Energy Cooperative member and ask about any current promotions.*





# POWER DOWN

for energy conservation

## REDUCING YOUR ENERGY DEMAND

Peak energy demands typically occur between 5 to 8 PM in the winter. To help reduce demand charges for the Cooperative, consider doing one or more of these small actions:

- **DELAY** washing or drying clothes.
- **DELAY** running the dishwasher.
- **TURN DOWN** your thermostat by four degrees.



The more members that take even the smallest steps to conserve, the greater the impact. Help us reduce demand charges by signing up for "Power Down" today! Visit [peoplesenergy.coop/power-down-voluntary-load-reduction](http://peoplesenergy.coop/power-down-voluntary-load-reduction) to get started.

## START SAVING TODAY

With our PEC home energy savings web page, members can identify where a home or business uses energy and how that energy can be used more efficiently. More information about the options listed below can be found by visiting [peoplesenergy.coop/home-energy-savings](http://peoplesenergy.coop/home-energy-savings).

▶ **HOME ENERGY SAVINGS KITS:** We have partnered with several of our local libraries and city halls to have home energy savings kits available to use for free. The kits walk you through simple tools which can help you evaluate your energy usage and identify places you can make improvements.

▶ **TOUCHSTONE ENERGY COOPERATIVE'S HOME ENERGY ADVENTURE:** Test your energy efficiency smarts and learn how you can improve your home's energy efficiency AND save money!

▶ **ESTIMATING APPLIANCE AND HOME ELECTRONIC ENERGY USE:** Before replacing appliances in your home or business, understand exactly how much energy your current appliances use. The Department of Energy's appliance calculator will make that easy to determine.

▶ **MN DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE HOME ENERGY GUIDE:** Each year, the Minnesota Department of Commerce publishes the Home Energy Guide available to all residents. Copies are available on our website or members can ask for one at the Cooperative's office.



## HOME ENERGY AUDITS

Having a home energy audit conducted by a trained professional ensures everything in your home or business has been inspected and is operating efficiently.

When an approved audit is performed, the Cooperative will pay half the cost (up to \$500) when the member pays for and implements measure recommendations as a result of the audit. Other prescriptive rebates apply as well!

To learn more about Home Energy Audits, visit [peoplesenergy.coop/energy-audits](http://peoplesenergy.coop/energy-audits).



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIPS WHEN PURCHASING AN AIR PURIFIER

*Room air purifiers are becoming an increasingly popular choice for people looking for cleaner air in their homes. With the ability to remove fine particles, such as dust and pollen, these small electric appliances are especially beneficial to those suffering from allergies.*

Before purchasing an air purifier for your home, there are a few important things to consider. First, familiarize yourself with the amount of electricity the appliance uses. According to ENERGY STAR, “a standard room air purifier, operating continuously, uses approximately 550 kWh per year in electricity. This is more than the energy used by some new refrigerators.”

To make sure the unit you’re considering is an energy-efficient appliance, look for the ENERGY STAR label on the product. These labels note that “certified room air purifiers are 40 percent more energy-efficient than standard models, saving consumers about 225 kWh/year and \$30 annually on utility bills.”

Other things to consider when buying an air purifier include the size of the room you plan to place the unit in and the room’s ceiling height. If you have high ceilings, you may want to select an air purifier with a higher Clean Air Delivery Rate (CADR). This rate measures how quickly a unit delivers filtered air and is helpful for determining the performance of an air purifier. Also factor in where you plan to place the unit – floor, tabletop, and wall-mounted options are all available.

*By being a smart shopper, you can make sure you purchase the room air purifier that best fits your home and helps save your energy dollars.*

## ARE YOU GETTING A NEW DISHWASHER? WE’VE GOT YOUR REBATE!


Whether you’re installing a new dishwasher or upgrading your HVAC equipment, remember to check out our website for possible rebate options.

*People’s Energy Cooperative offers rebates on appliances, lighting, water conservation products, smart power strips, electric vehicle chargers, and a wide variety of agriculture, commercial, and industrial equipment. Two hundred fifteen.*

Visit [www.peoplesenergy.coop/rebates](http://www.peoplesenergy.coop/rebates) to learn more.

## Has Your Phone Number Changed? LET US KNOW.

A friendly reminder to let us know when your contact information changes. Especially if you no longer use land line telephone service. It’s important that we have accurate contact information in the event of an emergency or planned outage. Call 800-214-2694 or to verify your information is up-to-date. You can also email us at [memberservices@peoplesrec.com](mailto:memberservices@peoplesrec.com).



# STAYING SAFE DURING A POWER RESTORATION

*Being prepared when the electricity goes out makes a difficult situation a little easier to handle while our crews restore power.*

## HOME SAFETY

- **HAVE FLASHLIGHTS** and extra batteries easily available in a predetermined location.
- **ONLY USE GENERATORS** outdoors and away from windows.
- **NEVER USE A GAS STOVE** to heat your home.
- **DISCONNECT APPLIANCES** and electronics to avoid damage from electrical surges.
- **NEVER ENTER A FLOODED BASEMENT** if electrical outlets are submerged. The water could be energized.
- **IF YOU RELY ON MEDICAL DEVICES** powered by electricity, talk to your medical provider about a power outage plan.

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## OUTDOOR SAFETY:

- **IF YOU COME ACROSS ONE OF OUR CREWS** working to restore power, maintain a safe distance so crew members can focus on their work. When safely possible, please shift over one lane or slow down to help protect our roadside crews.
- **TREAT EVERY DOWNED POWER LINE** as energized and dangerous. Stay far away from the line and encourage others to do the same.
- **DO NOT DRIVE OVER ANY DOWNED POWER LINES.** If you do come in contact with a downed power line, do not leave the vehicle. Wait for utility and emergency professionals to make sure the power line is de-energized before exiting the vehicle. If the vehicle is on fire, jump out of the vehicle, landing with your feet together and making sure no parts of your body are touching the vehicle and the ground at the same time, then shuffle at least 40 feet away.

## KEEPING YOUR FOOD SAFE

*Follow these tips from USDA to help minimize food loss during a power outage and reduce your risk of illness.*

### BEFORE A POWER OUTAGE



Keep refrigerator at 40° or below. Freeze items like fresh meat and poultry that you won't use immediately. Keep freezer set to 0° or below. Group frozen foods to help items stay colder longer.



If you anticipate an extended power outage, buy dry or block ice to keep the fridge and/or freezer cold.

### DURING A POWER OUTAGE

Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed! If the doors stay closed during the length of the outage:



A full freezer will hold its temp. for 48 hours.



A refrigerator will keep food safe for four hours.

### DURING A POWER OUTAGE



Check the temperature inside your refrigerator and freezer.



If the temperatures are safe, the food should be safe to eat.



# People's Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

1775 Lake Shady Avenue South  
Oronoco, Minnesota 55960

## HIGHLINE HI-LITES • February 2020 • Vol. 84 • Issue 02

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

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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!**

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS



an *alternative* way to  
support renewable energy

### FOR OVER 20 YEARS, THE EVERGREEN PROGRAM

has been an easy and affordable way for members of the Cooperative to support the development of renewable energy, including utility-scale solar installations. Dairyland Power Cooperative developed this program to provide members an opportunity to voluntarily contribute to the increased use of renewable energy sources without installing their own system.

Visit [peoplesenergy.coop/evergreen-renewable-energy-program](http://peoplesenergy.coop/evergreen-renewable-energy-program) for more information about the program and how to get started.



Olmsted Soil & Water Conservation District

## TREE & SHRUB TRANSPLANT SALE

Orders are now being accepted for mid-April delivery. Supplies are limited, so order early.

**VARIETIES INCLUDE:** *Blackhills Spruce, Colorado Spruce, Norway Spruce, White Pine, Norway Pine, Maples, Oaks, Red Splendor Crab, Am Cranberry, Dogwood, Lilac, and more!*

2122 Campus Drive SE, Ste. 200  
Rochester, MN. 507-328-7070

[www.olmstedswcd.org](http://www.olmstedswcd.org)