



THIS *EARTH DAY*, WE TOOK A LITTLE EV TRIP TO **DRIVE THE TERRITORY**



PEOPLE'S ENERGY COOPERATIVE (PEC) strives to provide innovative energy solutions to members and serve as a trusted energy resource. As more and more electric vehicles (EVs) enter the transportation landscape, we want members to feel comfortable accessing the charging resources necessary to make EV ownership practical and easy.



ON THURSDAY, APRIL 22, a team set out from our office in Oronoco to visit local businesses and organizations in our service territory with our Chevrolet Bolt in recognition of Earth Day. At each stop, the team highlighted the local business on our social media pages and shared information about driving and charging EVs. The conversation included information about available EV charger rebates, EV charging programs, and PEC's participation in CHARGE EV, LLC.

CHARGE EV, LLC is a partnership of 31 electric cooperatives throughout Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin working to build an electric vehicle charging network in rural areas. More information on this collaboration and its initiatives can be found at www.charge.coop.

We want to thank the City of Byron, House Chevrolet in Stewartville, the City of Chatfield, Bennett's Eyota Food Market, O'Neill's Pizza and Wescott Orchard in Elgin, and Plainview-Elgin-Millville High School in Plainview for hosting stops along the way. It was a beautiful day to enjoy conversation with members about the future of electric vehicles.

inside:

03. *Understanding Capital Credit Allocation*

07. *Thinking About a New Water Heater?*

08. *Know Your EV Charging Stations*

10. *Standby Generator Program*

CEO MESSAGE

FROM MICHAEL J. HENKE, PRESIDENT & CEO



mhenke@peoplesrec.com

Spring is here! As an avid fisherman, I am always excited to get my boat back in the water. I also enjoy golf and working in my yard and am looking forward to many outdoor adventures with my 10-month-old granddaughter this spring and summer.

May is National Electric Safety Month and as we look forward to outdoor activities and enjoy the warmer months, I encourage you to consider electrical safety when having fun. Whether you like water activities, backyard fun, or home improvement projects in your free time, each have some hazards to be aware of.

STAY SAFE AROUND WATER: An electrical hazard that many people are not aware of is electricity entering lake or river water from energized boats and docks. It is recommended not to swim around docks with electrical equipment, but if you do, make sure the equipment is in good condition and that cords are not hanging in the water.

If you are in the water and feel electric current, let others know and then tuck your legs up to make yourself smaller and try to move away from anything that could be energized. Remember, if you feel a shock, swim away from the dock.

If you are on the dock or shore when a swimmer reports feeling electric current, do not jump in. Rather, throw the swimmer a float and try to eliminate or turn off the source of electricity as quickly as possible. Then make sure to call for help. Electric-shock drownings are not that common and that's why I want to make sure you are aware they can happen.

AVOID ELECTRIC SHOCK IN YOUR YARD: As the weather gets warmer, more kids will be playing outside. Help keep kids safe by ensuring playground equipment, trampolines, and their favorite climbing tree are far away from power lines to avoid any potential contact with a powerline or an electrical shock caused by an arc.

Also, teach your children to never play around pad mounted transformers. These are the green metal boxes that contain the above ground portion of an

underground electrical installation. Pad mount transformers carry high voltages and are safe when locked, but they can be deadly if someone reaches inside. If you see one in your neighborhood that is open or damaged, call us immediately to report it.

CALL 811 BEFORE YOU DIG: If you have a spring or summer project that requires digging, make sure you call 811 a few business days before you plan to dig. The area will be surveyed and marked for public utilities within two or three days. This service is free of charge and can help you avoid costly, dangerous, and disruptive incidents caused by digging into underground utilities. Please note that only public utilities will be marked, and any underground lines, pipes, or equipment owned by the homeowner will not be marked.

When digging, keep at least 24 inches away from utility line markings. If you do hit an underground utility in the process of digging, report it, even if it appears to be undamaged. Small dents and microscopic damage can lead to major utility problems.

Each year, we track safety-related incidents at the Cooperative. Over half of the incidents that cause damage to cooperative equipment are caused by the public or a member. In 2020, there were 53 incidents caused by the public that totaled over \$170,000 in damage. Many involved people hitting our underground lines while digging. Some of the others involved a vehicle, lawn mower, or farm equipment hitting a pole, guy wire, or power line. Bottom line, please be aware of your surroundings and the electrical equipment near you. Not only to avoid injuries, but also to avoid the cost of repairing the damage as these costs are recovered from those who cause the damage.

I hope you get to enjoy the warmer weather and time with your family and friends!

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

MONTHLY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

highline

Vol. 85 • Issue 05

PEC's Board of Directors held its monthly meeting on April 28. During the meeting, the following items were discussed: *training on board roles and responsibilities; anti-harassment training; bylaw review; construction project updates; quarterly financials and capital budget review; education on electrical system components; 2020 safety metrics; and an evaluation of member appreciation events.* A quorum of directors was present, and the following actions were taken:

- ▶ Approved a 1.403 mill power cost adjustment for Legacy members for April usage billed in May.
- ▶ Approved the allocation of 2020 local operating margins of \$2,302,185, DPC capital credit allocation of \$706,340, and the SMEC capital credit allocation of \$211,709 to our members based on patronage.
- ▶ Approved Secretary/Treasurer Tracy Lauritzen as signatory for our local bank.
- ▶ Set the 2022 Annual Meeting date for Thurs., March 24, 2022 at 6:00 PM.

CAPITAL CREDIT ALLOCATION: WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?



On your May energy bill, you may have noticed that capital credits have been allocated for the year.

As a recipient of electrical service from People's Energy Cooperative (PEC), you are more than a customer, you are a member-owner. One of the advantages of being a member-owner is sharing in the margins generated by the Cooperative.

At the end of each year, PEC subtracts its operating expenses from the operating revenue collected to determine the Cooperative's operating margins. These margins are then allocated, or assigned, to members' capital credit accounts based on the amount of energy they purchased. The amount of energy you purchased is

also known as your patronage. It can be helpful to think of your capital credit account as being similar to a savings account. This account is the accumulation of margins which have been allocated to you each year based on your patronage.

Each year PEC's Board of Directors determines if previously allocated capital credits will be retired. This decision to retire capital credits is based on the Cooperative's financial stability and is typically done in October.

Capital credits are just one of the many differences that set cooperatives apart from other utility business models. Since 1958, PEC has retired \$18.3 million in operating capital credits and \$8.9 million in Dairyland Power Cooperative and SMEC capital credits to members.

MANAGEMENT

Michael J. Henke,
President/CEO

Patrick Nelson,
Director of Engineering
and Operations

Michelle Olson,
Director of
Member Services

Anthony Stern,
Chief Financial Officer

Gwen Stevens,
Director of Cooperative
Relations

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 1:
Joe Book

DISTRICT 2:
Jodie Tvedt

DISTRICT 3:
Robert Hoefs,

DISTRICT 4:
Tracy Lauritzen,
Secretary/Treasurer

DISTRICT 5:
Jerry Wooner,
Board Chair

DISTRICT 6:
Art Friedrich
Vice Chair

DISTRICT 7:
Jeff Orth

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

GENERAL INFO

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

Telephone: 507-367-7000

Toll-Free: 800-214-2694

Web Address:
www.peoplesenergy.coop

Gopher State One Call:
1-800-252-1166
(digging & line location)



OPERATION ROUND UP®

April Grants

To be considered for third quarter grants in 2021, applications must be submitted no later than June 20, 2021. Program guidelines and applications for Operation Round Up® donations are available at www.peoplesenergy.coop or by calling the Cooperative at 800-214-2694.

The People's Energy Cooperative Operation Round Up® Trust Board provided \$27,215 in grants the second quarter of 2021 to the following area organizations:

- **\$500: American Red Cross SE Minnesota in Rochester** – To support the Home Fire Program.
- **\$2,000: Bulldog Youth Baseball in Plainview/Elgin** – To support the purchase of a new scoreboard.
- **\$5,385: City of Elgin** – To help with the costs of sealing a well to protect the water supply.
- **\$3,500: City of Kasson – Economic Development Authority** – To support the Historic Wall and Pillars Project.
- **\$2,500: Immanuel Lutheran School in Plainview** – To support a playground update.
- **\$1,875: Kasson-Mantorville Community Education** – To support summer academic programming.
- **\$3,655: PEM Softball/Soccer in Plainview/Elgin** – To support the purchase of new scoreboards.
- **\$1,000: Plainview Public Library** – To help with the purchase of a portable indoor/outdoor public address system.
- **\$3,000: Relay for Life in Dodge County** – To help with event expenses. Six thousand six hundred seventy two
- **\$2,500: Salvation Army Heatshare in Rochester** – To support the Heatshare program in our region.
- **\$1,000: Stewartville Early Childhood** – To support Tiger Cubs Summer Preschool.
- **\$300: Stewartville Middle School** – For the purchase of coding drones.

Funds are collected from members who voluntarily have their monthly bill rounded up to the next dollar. Approximately 17,000 members participate with the average donation of \$6.00 a year per member. 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.



HomeServe Home Repair Service Plans available to PEC members include:

- ▶ Exterior & Interior Electrical Services
- ▶ Heating & Cooling
- ▶ Surge Protection
- ▶ Water Heater Repair & Replace
- ▶ Water Service Line
- ▶ Sewer Septic Line

For more info, visit: peoplesenergy.coop/homeserve-service-plan



Stewartville-Racine DIAMOND CLUB

OPERATION ROUND UP® SPOTLIGHT:

A BETTER BALLPARK EXPERIENCE FOR ALL

Thanks to the generosity of PEC members who have opted into the Cooperative's voluntary Operation Round Up program, the Stewartville-Racine Diamond Club was recently awarded a \$5,000 grant. These funds will be used to help the club construct restroom facilities as a part of The Sandlot project.

The Sandlot is a multi-phase project being pursued by the Stewartville-Racine Diamond Club (softball and baseball booster club) in close partnership with the Stewartville School District. Phase one hinges around building storage and fully operational bathrooms connected to city utilities. This facility will replace existing over-utilized on-site storage, and three portable toilets (in the local varsity and junior varsity complex).

"We are still in the fundraising stage right now and expect the project to go out for bids this spring," explains Tamsen Leimer, treasurer of Stewartville-

Racine Diamond Club. "Hopefully, construction will start by early August. We anticipate the project will get wrapped up before winter, so it is ready for next year."

The programs using the fields do not currently have restroom facilities or access to running water. "The addition of the bathrooms will add value to the complex. Having running water available is so important," Leimer comments. "Our players, fans, and spectators will have an enhanced experience and hopefully it'll help draw more people in as well."

The project has the potential to directly impact thousands of Stewartville football, soccer, baseball, and softball players and the fans who support them, in addition to the players, coaches, and fans from opposing teams. Stewartville-Racine Diamond Club is partnering with local businesses, the city, state and regional entities, players, alumni, and the Stewartville School District on this project.

"The overall generosity of our community is amazing," Leimer says, adding how she is thankful for PEC's Operation Round Up program and the members who make these donations possible.

IT PAYS TO BE A MEMBER: HIGH SPEED INTERNET



With speeds up to 3x faster than DSL, Viasat offers reliable, high-speed internet to the hardest-to-reach homes and communities where others can't go. Voted the best satellite internet provider by CNet for 2021.

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 if there are any special promotions.

PEC HELPS PLAINVIEW-ELGIN-MILLVILLE SCHOOLS SECURE REBATES

When the district recently completed significant remodels and additions to the Plainview-Elgin-Millville (PEM) Community Schools, People's Energy Cooperative helped save the district thousands of dollars through both custom and prescriptive rebates.

Regular conversations between the district and the Cooperative uncovered the opportunity for rebates. People's Energy Cooperative and Plainview-Elgin-Millville Schools then partnered with Dairyland Power to secure the rebates.

The rebates helped cover the cost of LED lighting upgrades, exit signs, occupancy sensors, daylight sensors, ECM motors, and variable speed drives. Rebates totaled \$31,581, with \$8,653 at the high school; \$11,799 at the PEM 7-8 junior high building; and \$11,128 at the PEM 4-6 elementary school. It is estimated these improvements will reduce usage for the school district by over 721,000 kWhs annually.

"Working with People's Energy Cooperative has truly been a positive experience, and the Cooperative

was extremely helpful and easy to work with!" says PEM Schools Superintendent Bill Ihrke. Twenty-four thousand two hundred twenty.

Businesses undertaking remodeling projects are encouraged to contact the Cooperative to discuss project details and evaluate ways to save energy and money. "By familiarizing ourselves with the types of projects members are undertaking, we are able to best serve our members," comments Marty Walsh, People's Energy Cooperative's economic development and key accounts manager. "In addition to rebates, People's Energy Cooperative offers several energy programs and connections to resources all intended to save our members money."

"We have invested quite a bit upgrading our systems, and to qualify for the energy rebates gives extreme value to our investment. Our facilities will be much more efficient, and the rebates allowed us to stretch our taxpayer dollars!"

Bill Ihrke, PEM Schools Superintendent



THINKING ABOUT PURCHASING A NEW WATER HEATER?

WHO DOESN'T LIKE GETTING MONEY BACK?

As part of PEC's Water Heater Energy Management program, we offer multiple rebates to members who replace or install an electric water heater when building or renovating.

Depending on the size of the electric water heater installed and if it is new or a replacement, you can receive up to an \$800 rebate. And, by enrolling in an energy management program, you will continue to save money with lower energy rates.

Plus, members who participate in these programs help the Cooperative maintain stable rates by shifting the electricity use of certain devices away from times when energy is most expensive.

SO, HOW DOES IT WORK? Simply enroll your new electric water heater in one of our energy management programs such as Dual Fuel, Off-Peak, Time-of-Use, or the Water Heater program. Once you have completed the enrollment process, a load receiver may be installed at your location depending on which program you are enrolled in. If a load receiver is required, then during energy control times or energy peaks, a radio signal is sent to the receiver and it automatically pauses the flow of electricity to your water heater. The length of control will be determined by the program you are enrolled in and the event.

IN ADDITION TO THE UPFRONT REBATE, you will save annually on lower rates. For example, the average household of four uses 400 kWh per month to run their electric water heater. When heating your water on an incentive rate, you could save around \$288 each year.

ELECTRIC WATER HEATERS are lightweight, easy to install, and environmentally friendly. Plus, they are incredibly safe, posing no threat of carbon monoxide poisoning, combustion, or explosion.

To learn more about the Water Heater Energy Management programs, visit peoplesenergy.coop or contact Cristina McNallan, electrical services and programs coordinator, at 507-367-7000 or email cmcnallan@peoplesenergy.coop.



PURCHASING A NEW ENERGY STAR RATED APPLIANCE? WE'VE GOT YOUR REBATE FOR THAT.

Whether you're installing a new electric water heater or electric vehicle charger, remember to check out our website for possible rebate options on appliances, lighting, water conservation products, solar, smart power strips, HVAC, and a variety of agriculture, commercial, and industrial equipment. Visit peoplesenergy.coop/rebates for more.



CO-OP CONNECTIONS GO BEYOND THE CARD & SAVE

Find all the ways you'll save money through the new and improved app!

- ▶ Shop local & save
- ▶ Nationwide partner deals
- ▶ Prescription savings
- ▶ 2-for-1 coupons
- ▶ Cash back with online shopping
- ▶ Hotel discounts
- ▶ Savings tracking
- ▶ Movie & event ticket discounts

Download the app for free on **Apple App** and **Google Play Stores** and start saving!

GET TO KNOW YOUR ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS

The world of electric vehicles is quickly changing, so it is easy to get overwhelmed with all the information there is to know. We can help you understand EV charging stations.



| AC LEVEL ONE | AC LEVEL TWO | DC FAST CHARGE |
|--|--|--|
| VOLTAGE: 120V 1-Phase AC | VOLTAGE: 208V or 240V 1-Phase AC | VOLTAGE: 208V or 480V 3-Phase AC |
| AMPS: 12 to 16 Amps | AMPS: 12 to 80 Amps (Typ. 32 Amps) | AMPS: < 125 Amps (Typ. 60 Amps) |
| CHARGING LOADS: 1.4 to 1.9 kW | CHARGING LOADS: 2.5 to 19.2 kW (Typ. 7 kW) | CHARGING LOADS: < 90 kW (Typ. 50 kW) |
| CHARGE TIME FOR VEHICLE: 3-5 Miles of Range Per Hour | CHARGE TIME FOR VEHICLE: 10-20 Miles of Range Per Hour | CHARGE TIME FOR VEHICLE: 80% Charge in 20-30 Minutes |

Through our partnership in CHARGE EV, members will soon be able to order smart EV chargers directly from the Cooperative. Keep an eye out for more information coming soon on our Electric Vehicle resource page at peoplesenergy.coop/electricvehicles.



Schedule an Air Conditioner TUNE-UP & SAVE!



With the weather rapidly warming up, it is important to make sure your air conditioner is working properly before putting it to work this season. Regular maintenance helps prevent unexpected breakdowns, which often occur during the hottest days of summer.

TUNE-UP REBATE



To keep your system in the best condition, an annual tune-up is recommended. Hiring a professional to clean, evaluate, and inspect your home's air conditioner will help ensure the unit operates properly, efficiently, and safely.

New in 2021, People's Energy Cooperative (PEC) is offering a \$25 rebate to assist members with the cost of hiring a professional to perform an air conditioner tune-up. Air Conditioner Tune-Up rebates are only available for existing homes and small commercial customers with central air conditioners or air source heat pumps less than or equal to 5.5 tons. Members are eligible for the rebate every two years.

Rebates are in place through the end of 2021, or until funds are depleted. To qualify, equipment needs to be on Cooperative lines and the tune-up must be completed by a certified technician. Window units are not eligible.



Take advantage of this new opportunity to save and schedule a tune-up soon!

Looking for another way to save energy and money? Enroll in the Cooperative's Cycled Air Conditioning Program.



Program participants receive a \$5 credit on their energy bills during the months of June, July, and August. A small radio-controlled receiver gets installed on the outside of participants' homes near the central conditioning unit (*not a window or wall unit*). Members are not charged for the cost of the receiver or installation, which is done by a licensed electrician. Twenty-five thousand four hundred four.

During peak demand times (*typically hot, humid days*) the receiver may be automatically activated by Dairyland Power Cooperative, PEC's power supplier, to cycle participants' air conditioners off and on in 15-minute intervals to help reduce the load on the grid. However, the fan stays on, circulating already-cooled air throughout the home. Most people don't even notice when the activation has occurred.

Members interested in signing up for PEC's Cycled Air Conditioning Program should start by completing the Cycled Air Conditioning form located under "Energy Management Resources" at peoplesenergy.coop/energy-management-programs.





STANDBY GENERATOR PROGRAM AT PEC

Generate Safely

MAKE SURE to never use a portable generator indoors

DO NOT plug generators into standard electrical outlets.

USE HEAVY-DUTY extension cords to connect appliances into the generator.

START THE GENERATOR before connecting any appliances to it.

The electric grid is very reliable; however, our nearly 3,000 miles of power lines are exposed to Minnesota's weather and creatures can cause power outages from time to time.

For most members, being without power for a few hours is merely an inconvenience, but for others, continuity of service is crucial.

PEC's standby generator program is ideal for members with a home business, sump pump, medical needs, or simply the desire to always have the comfort and conveniences that electricity provides. Eleven thousand eight hundred eighty-seven.

If you are interested in learning more, visit peoplesenergy.coop/standby-generator-program. The process involves home visits and we follow recommended COVID-19 protocols to keep our employees and members safe.

DO YOU HAVE A STANDBY GENERATOR FOR WHEN STORMS KNOCK OUT THE POWER?



Even though generators are great resources for when the power goes out, they can cause a safety concern for our lineworkers, especially when we don't know about them. If a generator is feeding power into your home and has not been properly connected by a licensed electrician, it can create backfeed on our primary line, causing serious, and potentially fatal, consequences.

If you have a generator installed, and we do not already know about it, please let the Cooperative know by emailing memberservices@peoplesenergy.coop or calling 800-214-2694.

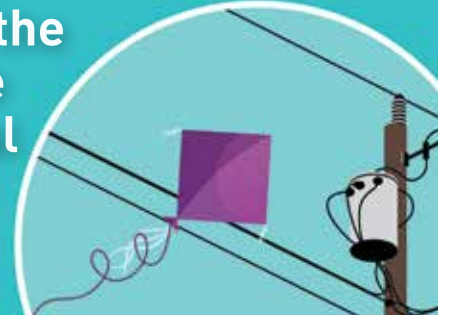


GET SMART ABOUT ELECTRICAL SAFETY! MAY IS NATIONAL ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

Never plug an extension cord into another extension cord.



Talk to your kids about the importance of electrical safety.



Only use the light bulbs that match the recommended wattage on the light fixture.



Label circuit breakers to understand the different circuits in your home.

PEC'S TREE PLANTING GUIDELINES

With warmer weather, you may be thinking about landscaping. If you are considering planting new trees, please be sure to review the chart below for guidelines before you start digging. Visit peoplesenergy.coop/landscape-tree-planting-guidelines.

SMALL TREE ZONE

Trees less than 25' in height/spread at least 25' from lines

MEDIUM TREE ZONE

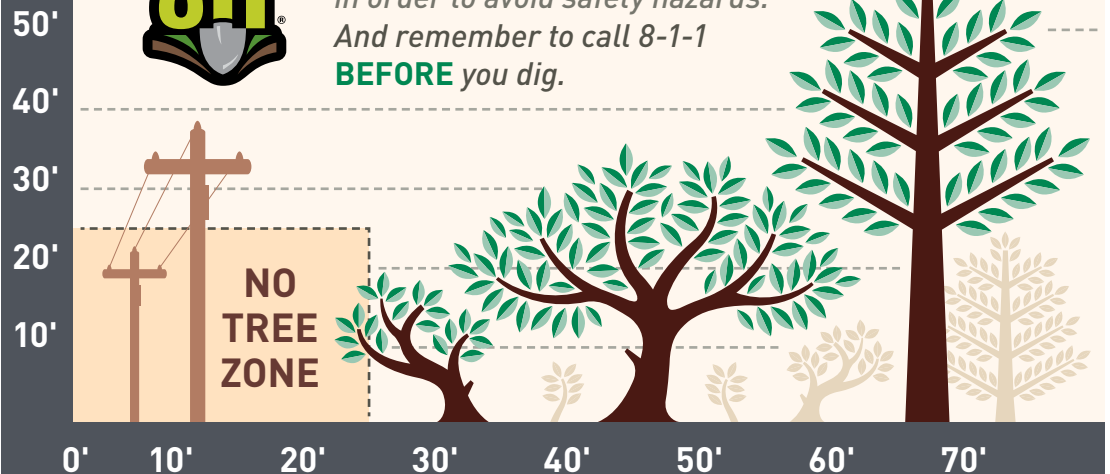
Trees less than 25'-40' in height/spread at least 40' from lines

LARGE TREE ZONE

Trees larger than 40' in height/spread at least 60' from lines



Follow our planting guidelines in order to avoid safety hazards. And remember to call 8-1-1 **BEFORE** you dig.



visit: peoplesenergy.coop

SMALL TREES

MEDIUM TREES

LARGE TREES



People's Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

1775 Lake Shady Avenue South
Oronoco, Minnesota 55960

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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. 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 bill.

GOOD LUCK IN FINDING YOUR ACCOUNT NUMBER!

Memorial Day

PEC will be closed Monday, May 31 to observe Memorial Day. If you have an outage or an electrical emergency, please call 800-214-2694.

PEC honors the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice in serving our nation.



1. Sign up to receive Power Down alerts through SmartHub, our free online account management tool.
2. During peak energy alerts, try to voluntarily reduce your energy use.
3. When the peak energy alert is over, resume your normal energy use.

Visit: peoplesenergy.coop/power-down-voluntary-load-reduction



When many people make small changes, those changes add up to significant savings and help keep rates stable!

THE COOPERATIVE'S 2021 VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

Throughout the year, PEC works with tree contractors to help us execute our vegetation management program for line maintenance. Part of that includes spraying an herbicide application which helps slow the growth in areas that have already been trimmed. Members affected by this work will be notified via postcard in advance of the work being completed.

In June, Carr's Tree Service will be working in the Rock Dell area. Also, during this time, New Age Tree Service will be working in the West Albany and Thielman areas.

Our vegetation management policy is available on our website by visiting peoplesenergy.coop/vegetation-management. If you have questions regarding the work being done, call the Cooperative at 800-214-2694.