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### GENERAL INFORMATION

Office Hours:

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Telephone: 507-367-7000

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

Gopher State One Call:

1-800-252-1166

(for digging & line location)

# New Cooperative Rules

## REITERATE THE *DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS*



*Thanks to 'local democracy' legislation passed earlier this year, your Board of Directors assumed, by resolution on August 31, the authority that had been delegated to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) as it relates to cogeneration and small power generation.*

Prior to assuming this responsibility and establishing rules consistent with PUC rules (*Chapter 7835*), the Board hosted a special member meeting on July 19 to allow members to ask questions and comment on the proposed rules. Fifteen members attended the meeting and expressed no concerns about the rules prompting the Board to move ahead as planned.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?** It means that as of September 1, members with distributed generation facilities (*i.e. wind and solar energy*) must follow the Cooperative's rules as they relate to cogeneration and small power generation instead of the PUC's rules.

**WHAT DOES IT CHANGE?** Not a lot. The rules adopted by the Board at its August 31 Board meeting are virtually the same as the PUC's. The exception is that now if a member has a dispute regarding distributed generation fees or policies, they must follow the Cooperative Dispute Resolution Process.

The process states: "*Member(s) should make reasonable efforts to resolve disputes with Cooperative staff including the Cooperative's President & CEO before taking a dispute to the Cooperative's Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall provide timely opportunity for any member(s) with a dispute to bring the issue(s) to the Board for resolution. (continued on page 2)*

# CEO MESSAGE

FROM ELAINE J. GARRY, PRESIDENT & CEO



*Elaine J. Garry*

egarry@peoplesrec.com

*Thank you to all the members who joined us at the Member Appreciation event at Ironwood Springs on September 9. As you can see by the pictures on page four, a good time was had by all.*

Looking ahead to October, I want to remind everyone of our member meetings being held throughout our service territory. I hope you'll join us at one of the following locations to get updates about the Cooperative, share ideas or concerns, and ask questions. Please RSVP by emailing [rsvp@peoplesrec.com](mailto:rsvp@peoplesrec.com) or by calling 507-367-7000.

- **PEC CONFERENCE CENTER, ORONO**  
October 2 – 6:30 p.m. *(light meal at 6:00 p.m.)*
- **PLAINVIEW AMERICAN LEGION POST 179**  
October 3 – Noon *(light meal at 11:30 a.m.)*
- **BYRON PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
October 10 – 6:30 p.m. *(light meal at 6:00 p.m.)*
- **CHATFIELD CENTER FOR THE ARTS**  
October 12 – 6:30 p.m. *(light meal at 6:00 p.m.)*
- **STEWARTVILLE CIVIC CENTER**  
October 17 – Noon *(light meal at 11:30 a.m.)*

I'd also like to remind you that October is the month we distribute capital credits!

To maintain financial health, your cooperative plans for slightly more revenue than we spend each year. This enables us to be financially ready for unexpected expenses. These margins are then returned to members as capital credits. That means you, not a group of private investors, benefit from any margins produced by the Cooperative.

We have returned \$23.3 million in capital credits to our members over the years and you will see either a credit on your bill or check in the mail if you are eligible to receive capital credits. An insert with more information about how capital credits work will accompany your bill in October.

Finally, I'd like to draw your attention to the ad on page four for Touchstone Energy's "Who Powers You" contest. This is a great opportunity to recognize someone who is doing outstanding work in your community. The top prize is \$5,000 cash and national recognition!

I know there are a lot of remarkable people in our community and I hope that if you know one of them, you'll take the time to enter them into the contest so they can be recognized for their work and inspire others.

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

## NEW CO-OP RULES REITERATE THE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS *(continued from cover)*

*The Cooperative Board of Directors shall weigh the issues and circumstances of the case and make a determination on any dispute brought to the Board which must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. In the event the member(s) and the Cooperative cannot resolve the dispute, either the member(s) or the Cooperative may request mediation."*

**WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?** Because it returns authority to the local, member-elected Board of Directors that govern the Cooperative. This was the only area of cooperative business that the PUC had authority over electric cooperatives.

*Members considering a distributed generation facility are encouraged to visit the 'Renewable Energy' page on our website for the Cooperative's cogeneration and small power generation rules, the interconnection application as well as other resources.*





Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives  
The power of human connections®

#WHOPOWERSYOU

# Your community. Your inspiration.

➔ [WhoPowersYou.com/Enter](http://WhoPowersYou.com/Enter)

Nominate someone today for  
the **#WhoPowersYou** contest

This is your chance to honor someone in your community and celebrate the power of human connections. Visit [whopowersyou.com/enter](http://whopowersyou.com/enter) between 10/2/17 and 11/4/17 and submit a photo of your nominee. Then tell us why that person inspires you and how they make a difference in your co-op community—and they could win a cash prize!

## Together, let's celebrate the power of human connections

As the national network of more than 740 co-ops, Touchstone Energy Cooperatives value the people who elevate and energize our communities. That's why we are launching a contest to honor inspirational community members across the country.

Winners will be selected by a panel of judges based on the impact they on the community. All entries must be submitted by November 4, 2017. Winners will be announced January 2018. NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. VOID WHERE PROHIBITED. Visit [whopowersyou.com](http://whopowersyou.com) for full contest rules.

### CONTEST PRIZES

- GRAND PRIZE **\$5,000**
- SECOND PLACE **\$2,000**
- THIRD PLACE **\$1,500**
- HONORABLE MENTION **\$500**

Sponsored by Touchstone Energy Cooperative, Inc., 4301 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22203. ©2017.

Fun Times Were Had by all at this year's family picnic!



# 2017 MEMBER APPRECIATION

Over 1,700 members gathered on Saturday, September 9 at Ironwood Springs Christian Ranch to enjoy a fun time with family and friends. It was a team effort and we're thankful to the following businesses (and cooperative members) for making it a great day.

- Ironwood Springs Christian Ranch for their hospitality and great cooking!
- Prairie Walls for the climbing wall.
- Parties Made Simple for the bounce houses, and ice cream and cotton candy machines.
- Sunshine Sanitation for taking care of the garbage.
- Majestic Tents for the large tents.

For more pictures from the event, check out our Member Appreciation Event photo album on Facebook. While you're there... like us!





# are you Secure?

CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS MONTH

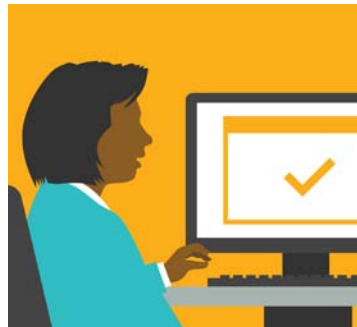
PROTECTING YOUR PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL DATA

*Sony, Target, Home Depot, Yahoo and even the U.S. Office of Personnel Management have all been attacked by cybercriminals. Let's face it: In today's world, the cybersecurity threats facing our nation can seem overwhelming – and downright scary. Cybersecurity, specifically the protection and security of member-owners' assets and the nation's complex, interconnected network of power plants, transmission lines and distribution facilities is a top priority for electric cooperatives and other segments of the electric power industry.*

This October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month (NCSAM). Since its inception under leadership from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the National Cyber Security Alliance, NCSAM has grown exponentially, reaching consumers, small and medium-sized businesses, corporations, educational institutions and young people across the nation. Twenty-six thousand seven hundred fifty-six.

By raising awareness and understanding basic cybersecurity practices, we can all work together to combat cyberthreats. You have a role to play in ensuring the security of your personal and professional data. Avoid the use of thumb drives and other portable memory devices, and be sure not to click on weblinks or attached files in emails when you're not certain of who the sender is. Additional tips on the right can also help to safeguard your computer or tablet.

*We hope you will join us in raising cybersecurity awareness. Use and follow **#cyberaware** on social media to show and share your support. We'll have tips on our Facebook and Twitter pages throughout the month of October with ways you can stay safe online.*



**KEEP PACE WITH NEW WAYS TO STAY SAFE ONLINE.** Check trusted websites for the latest information. Share tips with friends, family and colleagues.



**TRY TO CHANGE YOUR PASSWORDS EVERY SIX MONTHS.** Remember, the strongest passwords are at least 12 characters long, including both numbers and capital letters.



**KEEP ALL SOFTWARE ON INTERNET-CONNECTED DEVICES – including PCs, tablets and smartphones – up to date to reduce risk of infection from malware.**



# Back-to-School

## COLLEGE-FRIENDLY AND ENERGY EFFICIENT

College kids are returning to school this fall and setting up their “home away from home,” complete with TVs, computers, refrigerators, and custom lighting.

*And although they may not be paying the bills, it's still important to encourage them in regards to staying energy efficient.*

*Consider this: if every US college student replaced a single incandescent light bulb with an LED, we could avoid the emissions of a small commercial power plant for the school year.*

*As your college students are settling in, have them consider these tips, courtesy of [smarterhouse.org](http://smarterhouse.org).*

- **BUY EFFICIENT:** Look for the blue ENERGY STAR® label which signals products that are among the most efficient in their category. These products aren't necessarily more expensive to buy, and by using less energy, they're cheaper in the long run.
- **FIND ALTERNATIVES:** When making a hot drink, use an electric kettle rather than a microwave. For cooking or re-heating food, a microwave uses less energy than a toaster oven. To minimize or avoid using air conditioning, use a fan or take a cool shower.
- **WORK WITH MOTHER NATURE:** On hot days, close the window blinds to keep out the sun's warmth and reduce the need for air conditioning. Keep blinds closed during cold nights; it adds insulation to a window, reducing the need for heating. Whenever reasonable, use daylight to reduce the need for artificial lighting.
- **GO LED:** If your student wants twinkle lights or a desk lamp, make sure they use LEDs, or light emitting diodes. These light bulbs use a fraction of the energy of incandescents, last a lot longer, and look the same.
- **GIVE THE LAPTOP A REST:** Computers can be a student's biggest energy draw – if it stays on all the time. Fortunately, most electronics now have settings such as automatic turn off that reduce energy use. Dim your screen (especially at night so you feel drowsy enough to sleep), and make sure your computer sleeps, too. Remember: screensavers don't save energy; sleep mode does.
- **USE A POWER STRIP:** The single best thing to buy is an advanced power strip or surge protector, which makes it much easier to turn off electronics when they're not in use. Plug all electronics into this strip and unplug or turn off the strip when you leave. A master-controlled one can, once a primary device such as a computer is turned off, automatically turn off the outlets used by accessories such as speakers and monitors. One thousand nine hundred forty-three.



# People's Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

1775 Lake Shady Avenue South  
Oronoco, Minnesota 55960

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## 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!**



# HARVEST SAFETY

Harvest season will soon be upon us. Remember when operating high-profile machinery to be aware of your surroundings. An extra moment of safety now could avoid a tragic situation later.

- **USE CARE WHEN RAISING AUGERS** or the bed of grain trucks around power lines. Twenty-one thousand two hundred twenty-five.
- **USE A SPOTTER** when operating large machinery near power lines. Do not let the spotter touch the machinery while it is being moved.
- **BE CAREFUL NOT TO RAISE ANY EQUIPMENT** such as ladders, poles or rods into power lines. Non-metallic materials such as lumber, tree limbs, ropes and hay will conduct electricity depending on dampness, dust and dirt contamination.
- **NEVER ATTEMPT** to raise or move a power line to clear a path!
- **DON'T USE METAL POLES** to break up bridged grain inside bins. Know where and how to shut off the power in an emergency.
- **USE QUALIFIED ELECTRICIANS** for work on drying equipment and other farm electrical systems.

### REMEMBER, ACCIDENTS DO HAPPEN.

If the vehicle you are in makes contact with a power line, stay on the equipment, warn others to stay away and call 911. Do not get off the equipment unless there is imminent risk of fire or until the utility crew says it is safe to do so. If you must exit the vehicle before the area has been secure, jump off the equipment with your feet together, without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Then, keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

*People's Energy wishes all farmers in our area a safe and plentiful harvest season!*