

highlight



APRIL 2025

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF PEOPLE'S ENERGY COOPERATIVE

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CEO MESSAGE

FROM MICHAEL J. HENKE, PRESIDENT & CEO

mhenke@peoplesenergy.coop

There are aspects of everyone's life that become our daily routine, and we don't give them much thought. We wake up, get ready, and tackle the day. This may include checking the latest news on a smart phone or tablet or maybe a stop at a coffee shop. When our day comes to an end we make dinner, do chores around the house, and maybe stream an episode or two of our favorite show before bed.

All of these comforts and conveniences have a cost to them. A morning latte costs just over \$5, and a Netflix subscription is nearly \$10 per month. This can add up over time – the morning latte alone costs \$100 per month! And what was the real value – short-term satisfaction? Check out the graph on this page showing daily costs many of us incur and how they compare to the daily cost of electricity.

The average daily cost of electricity for a People's Energy Cooperative (PEC) member with rural residential service is \$4.60. You could easily power your entire home every day for the price of that daily latte. Now to me, that's real value.

Electricity provides benefits that we often take for granted. It goes well beyond short-term satisfaction by allowing us to charge devices and have cold food and hot water, all in a comfortable indoor climate. Not to mention, it's also remained relatively cost-stable even amidst rising inflation. As I reported at our annual meeting last month, PEC members have experienced an average annual increase of 1.5% over the last 10 years when inflation has averaged 2.9% over that same time frame.

As a member-owned cooperative, People's strives to ensure your costs stay reasonable and that electricity remains a great value. It's not always easy, as there are several factors beyond inflation that impact the price of electricity – some within our control, but most outside our direct control.

The cost of electricity can fluctuate due to supply and demand, infrastructure investment, maintenance, and operational expenses. Weather patterns also contribute, affecting both demand and generation

Average Residential Member Electricity Use

\$4.60/DAY

Average Household Cell Phone Plan

\$4.70/DAY*

Cable/Internet Package

\$7.24/DAY*

High-Speed Internet (i.e. 1Gb)

\$2.10/DAY

Medium Black Coffee

\$2.99/DAY

Medium Latte

\$5.19/DAY

*Does not include additional costs such as phone, streaming, etc.

capabilities. Government policies, such as subsidies for renewable energy and taxes and regulations on emissions can affect electricity costs as well.

A few members have called in recent weeks asking about how the Canadian tariffs may affect electric bills. Our main power supplier, Dairyland Power Cooperative, is working closely with MISO (the electric grid operator) to understand the full impact of the tariffs. Because of the diverse power supply in the MISO grid and the fact that MISO receives less than 1% of its power from Canada, we currently believe impacts will be minimal. If this changes, we will communicate that with you.

As we continue to rely on electricity for nearly everything in our homes, schools, and businesses, we need it to be reliable and affordable. You can be assured we always have you top of mind and work every day to ensure electricity remains a great value for your money.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Michael J. Henke". The signature is fluid and cursive.

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

MONTHLY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

highline

Vol. 89 • Issue 4

PEC's Board of Directors held its monthly meeting on March 25. During the meeting, the following items were discussed: 2024 reliability metrics, 2024 Key Accounts Summary; final accounting adjustments made since the preliminary financials were presented in January; results from annual safety loss control visit from Federated Rural Electric Insurance; a review of 2024 Safety Report; preparations for the Annual Meeting; meetings that were attended by board members; and a NRECA Governance Talk video on Artificial Intelligence and the Electric Cooperative was viewed.

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

- ▶ Approved a PCA charge of 4.213 mills per kWh for Legacy members for March usage billed in April.
- ▶ Approved a PCA charge of 4.675 mills per kWh for SMEC members for March usage billed in April.
- ▶ Approved changes to Board Guideline 3 and Policies 303, 304, and 305.
- ▶ Accepted the annual audit as presented by Brady, Martz & Associates.

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

DID YOU KNOW?

You can do more than secure your home with Heartland Security.

Owned by 13 electric cooperatives, Heartland Security has designed and installed custom security systems for over 8,000 homes and businesses throughout the upper Midwest. PEC is proud to be one of the electric cooperatives that owns Heartland Security.



Not only does Heartland work hard to protect homes and businesses in our area, but the company also offers medical alert systems. The Belle W medical alert system allows you to take peace of mind wherever you go. In fact, Arlene from Hayfield wrote to us and shared this:

"I wear their medical alert button, and I think every elderly person should have one. I fell the other day, and they called my son immediately and the Hayfield Ambulance came also. Don't let another day go by without getting this insurance!"

To learn more about what Heartland Security has to offer, visit www.heartlandss.com.

\$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!

Administrative Professionals Day

April 23

In late April, companies around the world recognize their support staff for the work they do behind the scenes keeping the office running. On this Administrative Professionals Day, we recognize Executive Assistant Sinéad for the work she does supporting the President & CEO, Board of Directors, and other colleagues. We are so grateful for her!



Sinéad

Thank You for Your 5 Years of Service!



Brandon



Tyler

Brandon and Tyler are valuable members of the team, bringing strong work ethics, positive attitudes, and a willingness to step up when needed. They are reliable, work well with everyone, and contribute to both productivity and team morale. Their dedication over the past five years has made a meaningful impact, and their efforts are truly appreciated.

Congratulations, Marty!

Congratulations to Economic Development and Key Accounts Manager Marty Walsh for becoming a Certified Key Accounts Executive (CKAE)! The CKAE certificate is offered by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) to improve service to commercial and industrial accounts. This is done through the establishment of business goals, identification of key account profiles, the practice of professional sales management, and the application of sound decision-making processes. To earn the certificate, Marty had to complete coursework, pass an exam, and submit business and marketing plans for evaluation. His written plans were judged by an outside business professional for content and strategic acumen.



Marty

National Public Safety Telecommunications Week

April 13-19

Every year, during the second week of April, public safety organizations around the country recognize their dispatch and communications personnel for the hard work they do behind the scenes keeping information flowing out to the field. We'd like to say a special thank you to Ben and Paulette, our engineering and operations coordinators, for their hard work supporting our engineering and operations teams! Twenty-three thousand five hundred ninety-three.



Ben



Paulette

Thank a Lineworker

If you see any of our lineworkers this month, please take a moment to thank them for keeping the electricity flowing to your home and powering our community.

On April 14, People's Energy Cooperative recognized National Lineworker Appreciation Day. The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) has recognized the second Monday in April as National Lineworker Appreciation Day since 2015. It is a time to honor and celebrate our lineworkers for their dedication in serving the Cooperative and our members.

Every day, lineworkers face many challenges. They regularly work near high-voltage power lines—often in the wake of Mother Nature's worst when the community is at its most vulnerable. Extreme weather, hazardous conditions, and unpredictable hours are routine parts of the job.

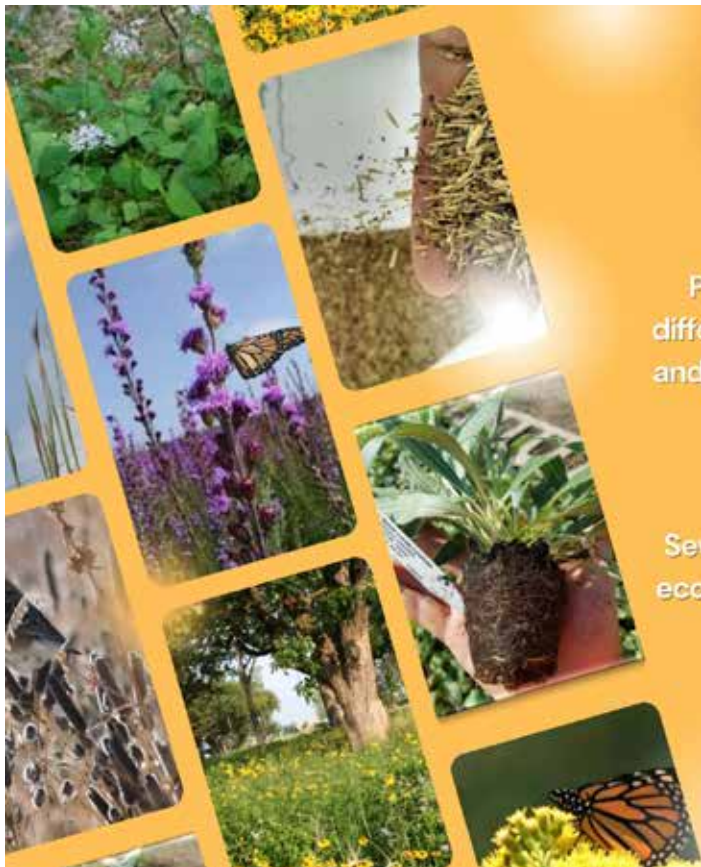
We express our appreciation to the dedicated team of lineworkers at People's Energy who work to keep the power on and our community safe.



We Want to Hear From You!

In April, we are partnering with our power supplier, Dairyland Power Cooperative to conduct a survey of a randomly selected sample of our residential members. The survey asks for information about the home, appliances, energy efficiency, and opinions regarding a handful of energy topics. This survey helps us plan for future energy needs.

If you receive this survey, please take 10 minutes to complete it and return it to our survey processor in the postage-paid envelope that will be provided or by completing it online using the link provided. We thank you in advance for your participation. It will help us continue to provide reliable electricity in the future!



2025 Annual Sale! PLANT KITS

Plant kits consist of one tray containing 36 plugs of six different species. Plant Kits will include six different flowers and grasses. A mix of species curated specially for each kit.

SEED MIXES

Several seed mixes to choose from, all comprised of local-ecotype seed native to Minnesota. Quantities of 100 sq. ft., 1000 sq. ft., and 5000 sq. ft. available.



www.OlmstedSWCD.org



88TH ANNUAL MEETING OF PEOPLE'S ENERGY COOPERATIVE

Last month, on March 27, over 500 members and guests gathered at the Rochester International Event Center and Plainview's American Legion for the Cooperative's 88th Annual Meeting. The meeting was held in-person at the Rochester International Event Center and members attending in Plainview watched a live broadcast of the event.

Board Director and Treasurer Tracy Lauritzen shared the 2024 financial report and informed members that the Cooperative remains in good financial standing.

Board Chair Jerome Wooner spoke to how People's Energy Cooperative is more than a power provider, it's a community supporter, business partner, advocate, and partner in education. He shared that he is continually impressed with all we do to help support the members and communities we serve. He stated, "While electricity is the lifeblood of society and a critical need, there are other needs we help meet simply because it's in our DNA to serve."

President and CEO Mike Henke reflected on how setting a firm foundation and focusing on operational excellence is making it possible for the Cooperative to



Rochester International Event Center

plan for a successful future. He shared that Board decisions over the years were always made with the best interest of the Cooperative at their core and always with an eye on the future. He added that current successes point to a focus on operational excellence in all that we do. Finally, he shared that the Cooperative's new strategic plan is a proactive one that he believes will take the Cooperative to the next level.

Results from the 2025 director elections were announced at the close of the meeting. In District 1, incumbent Jon Kroening of rural Rochester ran unopposed and received 1,622 votes. In District 6, incumbent Art Friedrich of rural Chatfield also ran unopposed and received 1,622 votes.

This year's high school scholarship winners were announced and recognized at the meeting. See this list of winners on the next page.

Questions asked by members that were not answered at the meeting have been responded to and some will be shared in future issues of the newsletter. If you missed the meeting, you can still watch it on the Cooperative's YouTube channel or Facebook page. Seven thousand thirty-three.



Plainview American Legion

2025 HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

During this year's Annual Meeting, we were proud to award 59 \$1,000 scholarships to graduating seniors in our service territory. To be eligible for scholarship funds, the student's parent or guardian must be a member of People's Energy Cooperative.

Scholarships are funded by unclaimed capital credits in accordance with state laws for unclaimed property.

We congratulate these seniors on their accomplishments and wish them well in their future endeavors.

Byron High School

Katrina Brinkmann
Landon Brommer
Tatum Brookman

Chatfield High School

Carly Backen
Adia Evans
Theodore Kivimagi
Aviana Thompson

Dover-Eyota High School

Dylan Andring
Jolie Draper
Alix Hardtke
Chloe Hardtke
Hayley Herman
Miranda Palmby
Megan Pittenger
Isaac Wendt

Grand Meadow High School

Alyssa Peterson

Homeschool

Kelsey Dickie
Charlotte Florek

Kasson-Mantorville High School

Karlynn Gustafson
Wyatt Sullivan

Lourdes High School

Abby Lindeen

Pine Island High School

Abbi Jacobson
Ava Jacobson
Elena Kabat
Seth Konik
Stella Paske
Ashley Pederson
Seth Schroeder
Evelyn Skierka
Zoe Zosel

Plainview-Elgin-Millville High School

Molly Eversman
Tessa Kellner
Lauren Klavetter
Joseph Sackreiter
Emma Tentis
Macy Wozney

Rochester Century High School

Giana Marina Biedermann
Cole Brodin
Annie Church
Hailey Rice
Eliza Rutledge
Craig Whitney

Rochester John Marshall High School

Brayson Sawyer

Rochester Mayo High School

Marlee Hoekstra
Hope Thomas

St. Croix Academy

Addison Degener

Stewartville High School

Luke Eastman
Alivia Garnatz
Zachary Hanson
Emmerson Horstmann
Kiley Jones
Haley Laures
Kaylee Lehrman
Alexandria Lennon
Danielle Mellenbach
Grace Miller
Delaney Sandford
Kathryn Struhar

Winona High School

Keeli Meyer



Cogeneration & Small Power Production Rate Change

PEC has conducted the annual recalculation of its cogeneration and small power production rates per Minnesota state statute, including the Distribution Grid Access Fee. All changes take effect with May 2025 energy use and will be reflected on June billing statements. Twenty-seven thousand one hundred four.

Average Retail Rate (Net Billing)		Rate per kWh	
Type of Service	Current	New as of May 1, 2025	
Residential Service	\$0.10873	\$0.11146	
Small General Service	\$0.09885	\$0.10772	
Medium General Service w/Demand	\$0.06248	\$0.06386	

Distribution Grid Access Fee (Effective May 2025)		
Type of Service	kW in Excess of 3.5kW	Not to Exceed
Residential Service	\$3.00 per kW	\$25.00
Small General Service	\$3.00 per kW	\$29.00
Medium General Service w/Demand	\$1.18 per kW	\$43.00

People's Energy Cooperative Distributed Energy Resources Compliance Statement

In compliance with People's Energy Cooperative's (PEC) adopted rules relating to cogeneration and small power production, PEC is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from cogenerators and small power producers who satisfy the conditions as a qualifying facility.

PEC is obligated to provide information free of charge to all interested members upon request regarding rates and interconnection requirements. All interconnections require an application and approval to become a qualifying facility.

Any dispute over interconnections, sales, and purchases is subject to resolution by the PEC Board. Interested members should contact the Cooperative by emailing DERInterconnect@peoplesenergy.coop or calling (800) 214-2694.



ROCHESTER
Is your home ready for an upgrade?

Receive step-by-step guidance on weatherization and electrification for a more comfortable, healthier, and safer home.

Join our **FREE Workshop Series:**

- ✔ **Stay Cool, Stay Warm: Heat Pumps Demystified**
Thursday, May 8, 6:00 p.m.–7:30 p.m.
- ✔ **Hot Stuff: Electrifying Water Heating, Cooking, and Clothes Drying**
Thursday, June 12, 6:00 p.m.–7:30 p.m.

TO REGISTER
Scan the QR code or visit:

www.electrifyeverythingmn.org

Electrify Everything MN is managed by Center for Energy and Environment and supported by the City of Rochester, Destination Medical Center, and other foundation and local government partners.




2025 Rate Increase

As a friendly reminder, members will experience a rate increase beginning with May 1, 2025 energy use, which will be reflected on the June billing statement. We've done our best to communicate the rate increase through multiple channels, so members know what the changes are and why they were made. Thirteen thousand forty-three.

For a listing of the most common rate changes, frequently asked questions, and details on the 2025 Rate Increase, we encourage you to visit peoplesenergy.coop/2025-rate-increase.

Vegetation Management 2025

Carr's and New Age continue to work with us to execute our vegetation management plan. In May, Carr's will be working in portions of Pleasant Grove, Sumner, High Forest, Racine, Pleasant Valley, Grand Meadow, and Frankford Townships. New Age will be working during this same time in portions of Pleasant Grove, Orion, Mazeppa, Oronoco, and Cascade townships.



BECOME AN ENTREPRENEUR TODAY!

LEARN TO SAVE, SPEND, & SHARE THROUGH THIS FUN, FREE PROGRAM



Lemonade Day!
ROCHESTER AREA MN

Lemonade Day is a FREE experiential program that teaches kids how to start, own and operate their very own business – a lemonade stand.

JUNE 7 2025

SAVE THE DATE!



LEMONADEDAY.ORG/ROCHESTER-AREA-MN



Reminder

The Cold Weather Rule Ends April 30

Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule helps protect residential members whose primary heating source is electric from October 1 through April 30. Those affected by the Cold Weather Rule must work with the Cooperative to arrange energy assistance or set up a payment plan. If you are concerned about your ability to pay your bill, please contact the Cooperative by calling (800) 214-2694 or emailing memberservices@peoplesenergy.coop.

DID YOU KNOW

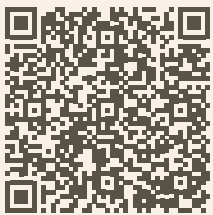
You Might Be Able to Save More?

Installing an energy efficiency product could save you more than just the money saved by using less energy. We encourage our members to take advantage of tax incentives available for a variety of energy efficiency projects.

As a result of the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, federal tax credits and deductions are available when undertaking projects that make homes and buildings more energy efficient. Check out these examples below:

Heat Pump Technology Air Source Heat Pumps, Heat Pump Water Heaters, and Biomass Stoves or Boilers	Claim 30% (up to \$1,200) for upgrading heat pump technology
Energy Efficiency Home Improvements Windows and Skylights, Doors, Insulation, Water Heaters (natural gas, oil, and propane), Furnaces, Boilers, Central Air Conditioners, Electric Panel Upgrades, and EV Chargers	Claim 30% (up to \$1,200) for energy efficiency home improvements
Clean Energy Equipment Geothermal Heat Pumps, Solar Energy Systems, and Small Wind Turbines	30% income tax credit

To learn more about these and other opportunities, visit www.energystar.gov/about/federal-tax-credits.



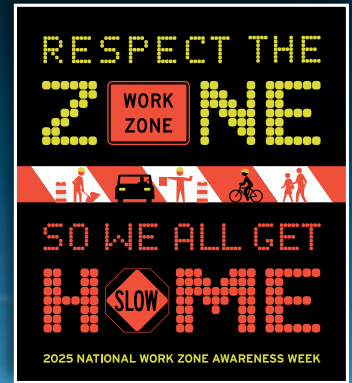
THAT'S NOT ALL!

Members who have completed a home energy audit can also take advantage of an up to \$150 federal tax credit available for all primary residence homeowners who file a federal tax return. The energy efficient home improvement tax credit is not income based. Learn more by scanning the QR code.

Looking for another way to save on your energy efficiency upgrades?

People's Energy Cooperative has a robust rebate program for members who are looking to make energy efficient upgrades at their home or business. From lighting to electric vehicle chargers and appliances to air source heat pumps – there just might be a rebate waiting for you to take advantage. Visit www.peoplesenergy.coop/rebates to learn more.

WORK ZONE AWARENESS



What should you do when you see a crew working on the side of the road? Reduce your speed. Move over at least one lane when safely possible. And always make sure to keep your full attention on the road.

When you follow safe driving practices around work zones, it helps keep you, your passengers, and our line crews safe. Our crews already face many potential dangers in the work they do. Making sure they have the space they need to complete roadside work is one way you can help make their job a little safer.

Minnesota's Ted Foss Move Over Law requires that when driving on a road with two or more lanes, drivers move one full lane away from stopped emergency vehicles that have their flashing lights activated. This law applies not only to ambulances, police officers, and firefighters, but also to utility, maintenance, and construction vehicles.

When it is not possible to move over one full lane, drivers should reduce their speed until they have completely passed by the work zone. It is important to pay attention to posted signs and keep vigilant for flashing lights indicating there is a work zone ahead.

National Work Zone Awareness Week

To draw attention to this important messaging, People's Energy Cooperative recognizes National Work Zone Awareness Week each spring. The theme selected for 2025 is: "Respect the zone so we all get home."

Tragically, many people are killed each year in work zones. In addition to highway worker occupational fatalities, there are hundreds of driver and passenger deaths. By exercising caution when encountering a work zone, you are helping protect yourself, your passengers, and the people who work along roadsides.

What You Can Do

Crews working along roadways rely on you to keep them safe at work. Make sure everyone can go home safely at the end of each day by:

- Avoiding distractions
- Reading all posted signs
- Obeying the speed limit
- Moving over when possible (or slowing down)
- Being prepared for sudden stops
- Using extra care around large vehicles



People's Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

1775 Lake Shady Avenue South
Oronoco, Minnesota 55960

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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Outage Notification Service

To improve communication when outages occur, we are planning to roll out a new outage notification service in May that is driven by our automated outage management system. Outage notifications via text and email will provide immediate, automated alerts, allowing members to stay informed during a power outage in their area.

Here's what you need to know:

- ▶ This is a value-added service and members will need to go into SmartHub to sign up.
- ▶ Any member with a mobile phone number and/or email address on file can enroll to receive outage notifications by text or email alerts. It's important to make sure your account information is accurate to take advantage of this service.
- ▶ Enrolled members can expect to receive notifications when our system detects or predicts a power outage in their area. The message will announce the outage and provide a link to our outage map for updates.
- ▶ You may have power and still receive a text message about an outage. This helps alert members in the area in case crews must access private property to restore power.

This initiative is part of our commitment to improving communication with our members. For more detailed information, check out peoplesenergy.coop/outage-texting.



**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