NOV. 2019 NEWS FROM YOUR PARTNERS AT PEOPLE'S ENERGY COOPERATIVE











YES, EVERY CENT COUNTS

OPERATION ROUND UP HITS ONE MILLION DOLLARS IN GIVING



OPERATION ROUND UP HIT THE ONE MILLION DOLLAR MARK IN OCTOBER WITH ITS LATEST ROUND OF GRANTS;

distributing over \$25K to 19 communities and organizations in the region. In total, members who participate in ORU have donated \$1,001,821 since 2003! "It's a wonderful milestone and a true testament to the partnership between the Cooperative and our members," says Operation Round Up Board President, Mark Williamson.

People's Energy Cooperative created the fund 17 years ago to help support a variety of charitable, educational, community, and youth-related programs throughout the region.

According to Williamson, ORU is brilliantly simple, "The program is funded by donations made by members of the Cooperative who voluntarily have their monthly electric bill rounded up to the next dollar. Over 17,000 members currently participate with an average donation of \$6 a year per member. Hitting \$1 million is a wonderful example that small change really can make a big difference."

The program focuses on the following categories: community service, economic development, education and youth, environment, emergency energy assistance, and disaster relief (see chart on page 2). ORU funds are held separately from the Cooperative's operating accounts and are administered through the volunteer Board of Trustees comprised of seven cooperative members. All funds contributed by members, yes 100 percent, go directly to the grant recipients.

The very first grant was delivered to Plainview EMS in May of 2003 to purchase a Lifepak. A Lifepak monitors vital signs and is a cardiac defibrillator used by emergency medical technicians and paramedics.

"When you live in a rural community without a hospital, the citizens depend on the town's emergency medical services," says former mayor Neil Weaver. "Back in 2003, being able to add lifesaving equipment to our ambulances literally made the difference between life and death."

Since that first ORU grant, the Plainview community has been the recipient of nearly \$64,000 in ORU grants. *(continued on page 2)*

CEO MESSAGE

FROM MICHAEL J. HENKE, PRESIDENT & CEO



Market OKL

mhenke@peoplesrec.com

November - I've always enjoyed this time of year. The crispness in the air, harvest time, and gathering with family. It's a time of gratitude and thankfulness.

As such, I want to start by expressing my personal gratitude to all veterans for your service to our country. I am so grateful to live in a country where we have freedom of religion, speech, and the right to vote. I came across a poem by Cheryl Dyson that helps express appreciation for our veterans.

> On Veterans Day we honor all, who answered to a service call.

Soldiers young, and soldiers old, fought for freedom, brave and bold.

Some have lived, while others died. and all of them deserve our pride.

We're proud of all the soldiers who, kept thinking of red, white, and blue.

They fought for us and all our rights. They fought through many days and nights.

And though we may not know each name, we thank ALL veterans just the same.

A special thank you to our board members and employees who are veterans. It's only fitting that people who served our country would work for an organization whose mission is to serve.

I also want to thank all cooperative members who participate in our Operation Round Up program and congratulate them on the \$1 million milestone! We are so honored to serve as a facilitator of generosity. We currently average approximately \$25,000 in quarterly contributions. These funds are really making an impact in our communities.

As we look forward to Thanksgiving, I hope you all have a blessed and restful holiday full of good food and fun times with family and friends. Happy Thanksgiving!

> Sincerely, Michael J. Henke, President & CEO. 507-367-7000

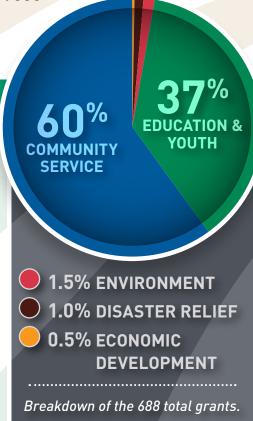


"We are so grateful to People's Energy Cooperative members for contributing to this community support program," says Clarissa Hadler, Plainview city administrator. "It has allowed our community to thrive and provided a better quality of life for our citizens and neighbors."

The Zumbro Valley Food Shelf received \$3,000 from ORU to help purchase food. "We get calls regularly from people in the community who are short of food. One of our passions as a church is to serve the community," said Pastor Colleen Hoeft. "This grant will help us keep our pantry full and ready for anyone who may need our services."

"I'm humbled, along with my fellow board members, to administer funding on behalf of our members to the many deserving groups and organizations in our region," reflects Williamson. "Our members truly embody the spirit of neighbors helping neighbors." We couldn't agree more.

Congratulations and thank you to PEC members who make a difference in people's lives through Operation Round Up. Now onto the \$2 million milestone!



MONTHLY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

highline

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PEC's Board of Directors held its monthly meeting on October 31. During the meeting the following items were discussed: third quarter financials, 2020 budget items, the five-year rate plan, and a board governance related video was shown.

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

- Accepted the Form 990 as presented.
- Resolved to increase the participant contribution limit for the 125 Cafeteria Plan based on IRS adjustments for inflation.
- Appointed delegates for cooperativerelated organizations.
- Appointed Cynthia O'Brien (Dist. 1), Nathan Boysen (Dist. 2), Chris Stolp (Dist. 3), Sharon Behrens (Dist. 4), Teresa Bierbaum (Dist. 5), Tom Duxbury (Dist. 5), Pat O'Neill (Dist. 6), Theresa Hornberg (Dist. 7), and Brian Braaten (Dist. 7) to the Member Advisory Committee (MAC).
- Set the next MAC meeting for Thurs., Dec. 12.

MANAGEMENT

Michael J. Henke, President/CE0

Gary Fitterer, Director of Engineering

Anthony Stern, Chief Financial Officer

Michelle Olson.

Director of Member Services

Gwen Stevens, Director of Cooperative Relations

Troy Swancutt, Director of Operations

LOOKING FOR A PROACTIVE ROLE WITH THE COOPERATIVE?

Consider serving on the Board of Directors. The Cooperative is currently seeking individuals to represent their fellow members in Districts 3. 5. and 7.

The Board of Directors is the governing body of the Cooperative and represents its members in policy and rate making, defines expectations for leadership, and provides policies and strategic goals.

"I was elected to the Board of Directors in 2018," says District 4 Director Tracy Lauritzen. "It has been a truly rewarding experience and privilege to represent my fellow members interest in the Cooperative. I encourage other members to step forward and consider serving."

Directors are elected to three-year terms, hold monthly board meetings,

attend cooperative events and participate in state, regional, and national conferences and training sessions.

Upon election in March, directors undergo training to learn about People's Energy Cooperative and are encouraged to complete their Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) certificate. The CCD certificate program includes courses about director duties and liabilities, understanding the electric business, board operations and process, strategic planning, and financial decision making.

Interested in serving as a director? To be considered for nomination by the Nominating Committee, contact PEC Director of Cooperative Relations Gwen Stevens at 507-367-7015 or gstevens@ peoplesrec.com before Jan. 17, 2020.

2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 1: Joe Book

DISTRICT 2: Ken Wohlers. Secretary/Treasurer

DISTRICT 3: Robert Hoefs, Vice Chair

DISTRICT 4: Tracy Lauritzen DISTRICT 5: Jerry Wooner, Board Chair

DISTRICT 6: Art Friedrich **DISTRICT 7:**

Jeff Orth

Visit 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

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

TOWNSHIPS SERVED BY EACH DISTRICT UP FOR ELECTION



- DISTRICT 3: Gilford, Hyde Park, Milton, Mazeppa, New Haven, Oronoco, West Albany, and sections one through 18 of Kalmar.
- DISTRICT 5: Dover, Elmira, Eyota, Orion, and Viola.
- **DISTRICT 7:** Stewartville, sections one through four, nine through 16, and 21 through 28; sections 33 through 36 of High Forest; sections 19 through 36 of Rochester; and sections one through three of Racine.



MINNESOTA'S Cold Weather Rule

A REMINDER THAT MINNESOTA'S COLD WEATHER RULE IS IN EFFECT AND WILL **REMAIN THROUGH APRIL 15. 2020.**

Please note this rule does not prevent the Cooperative from shutting off your power for nonpayment during winter months. If you receive a disconnection notice this winter, you must act promptly. Remember, disconnection notices are printed on your monthly billing statement. If you find yourself in need of energy assistance, please contact one of the following energy assistance providers in SE Minnesota:

- SEMCAC serves the counties of Dodge, Fillmore, Mower, Winona, Freeborn, Houston and Steele, 800-944-3281 [toll-free]
- Three Rivers Community Action, Inc. serves Olmsted and Wabasha counties. 507-732-7391 or 800-277-8418 (toll-free)
- Rochester Salvation Army HeatShare 507 288-3663 or 800-842-7279 (Outside of Olmsted County)
- First Call for Help at 211

CELEBRATE **OUR SMALL BUSINESSES**

With Black Friday and Cyber Monday, it's easy to neglect our local 'mom-and-pop' stores. Show our local businesses some love on Saturday, November 30 and shop local with Small Business Saturday. Remember to consider our local Co-op Connections participating businesses for extra savings!

B&C Plumbing • Byron Pet Clinic • C&M Screen Printing & Embroidery • Charlie Brown PC Applications • Chatfield Lumber Co. Inc. • Family Tree Nursery • Heartland Security . Moenning Meats, LLC . Midwest LifeShots Photography • Prestige Auto & Diesel Care • Rennings Flowers • RFour Meats • Rochester City Lines • Warners' Stellian • Wintrust Mortgage



DO WE HAVE YOUR CORRECT PHONE NUMBER ON FILE?

In the event we need to deliver critical information regarding your electric service, it is important that we have accurate contact information on file. If you have not done so recently, please take a few minutes to verify the telephone number(s) and email address(es) we have on file for you. This allows us to utilize multiple methods of communication to ensure you stay informed.

REVIEW AND UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION BY:

- Visiting our website, peoplesenergy.coop, and reviewing your account information through SmartHub (you need to be registered to do this).
- ► Calling the Cooperative at 800-214-2694.
- Sending an e-mail to memberservices@ peoplesrec.com.



UP TO \$3,500 SPECIAL REBATE

TOUCHSTONE ENERGY COOPERATIVES, MEMBERS & EMPLOYEES



FOR ELIGIBLE CUSTOMERS IN SELECT STATES. PROOF OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIRED.1

2019 NISSAN LEAF®



Special Rebate Code: G81194



\$3,500 rebate off MSRP starting at \$29,990

Plus: Up to \$7,500 Federal Tax Credits3 Total Savings: Up to \$11,000



2019 LEAF 62 kWh ePlus, Eligible customers can receive:

\$2,500 rebate off MSRP starting at \$36,5502

Plus: Up to \$7,500 in Federal EV Tax Credits

Total Savings: Up to \$10,000

Additional state and local benefits may also be available?

For complete details, visit peoplesenergy.coop or visit your local participating Nissan Dealer.

OPERATION ROUND UP®



Oct. Grants

To be considered for first quarter grants in 2020, applications must be submitted no later than December 20, 2019. 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 \$26,035 in grants to the following area organizations in the final quarter of 2019:

- \$1,804: Hometown Resource Center in St. Charles - To purchase merchandising and donation storage materials
- \$1,200: Plainview-Elgin-Millville **Elementary School** – To purchase reading support for at-risk students in Kindergarten through Grade 1
- \$4,506: Southeast Service Cooperative in Rochester - To support the SE MN Knowledge Bowl
- \$750: Othello Cemetery Assoc. in Genoa – To restore and preserve monuments at Othello Cemetery Fifteen thousand eight

- \$1,000: Dover-Eyota Music Association – In support of the 2019 SE MN a Cappella Festival
- \$4,250: Grand Meadow Fire Dept. To purchase a new vent fan
- \$1,000: Choral Arts Ensemble of Rochester - In support of the Christmas at Assisi performance costs
- \$1,000: Bear Cave Intermediate School in Stewartville - In support of the Wilderness Inquiry -Canoemobile program
- \$823: St. John's Wee Care Learning Center in Stewartville -In support of the STEAM-Powered Preschoolers program
- \$3,000: Brighter Tomorrows in Rochester – In support of the Winter Family Retreat 2020
- \$1,700: Kasson-Mantorville Community Education – In support of PBIS Implementation

- \$4.505: St. Felix Catholic School in Wabasha - In support of their water efficiency project
- \$500: Wabasha-Kellogg Public Schools - In support of their Rolling for Fitness and Fun program

Operation Round Up funds are collected from members who have their bill rounded up to the next dollar. 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.

Operation Round Up Trust Welcomes Janet Hoffman!



THE OPERATION ROUND UP TRUST is governed by a Board of Directors who represent each of the seven board districts of our service territory. This past October, we welcomed Janet Hoffman to the Board. Hoffman will be representing District 6. She joins Judy Plank (District 1), Beverly Johnson (District 2), Mark Williamson (District 3), Roger Rettmann (District 4), and Ann Lutteke (District 7). Thank you to Darlene Schmidt (District 6) and James Hobbs (District 5) for their six years of service on the ORU Board.

We are currently seeking a member to represent Dist. 5 on the Operation Round Up Board. If you live in Dover, Elmira, Eyota, Orion, or Viola townships and are interested in serving, contact Gwen Stevens by phone at 507-367-7015 or e-mail at gstevens@peoplesrec.com.

ORU® SPOTLIGHT: A local property that provides service and satisfaction for all who visit!





GAMEHAVEN Scout Reservation

In an effort to enhance program opportunities and make Gamehaven Scout Reservation a safer experience for both Scouts and visitors alike, the property recently upgraded both interior and exterior lighting at the local camp. These upgrades were possible because of a donation from People's Energy Cooperative's Operation Round Up® program.

'We would like to thank the members who participate in Operation Round Up for their generous contribution. It helps us provide a better program for our Scouts and also benefits the community as a whole," says Arne Landsverk, development director with Gamehaven Council.

Gamehaven Council, Boy Scouts of America operates the Gamehaven Scout Reservation just south of Rochester. The group was awarded \$2,000 to purchase energy-efficient light bulbs and fixtures for a pavilion, six buildings, and eight cabins located on the property. Some additional outdoor lighting was also installed to help illuminate the front parking lot and provide better lighting for a sledding hill.

"We were able to use the Operation Round Up grant money to purchase all of the supplies we needed for the lighting upgrades," Landsverk notes. "Our dedicated group of volunteers then donated their time and talents to install all of the fixtures and bulbs."

When the installation is complete, Gamehaven Scout Reservation will have 150 new LED bulbs illuminating its grounds. The energy-efficient LED lights will result in lower operating costs for the camp. They will also provide better security and offer a safer, well-lit environment for everyone who uses the camp.

Since programs first started at Gamehaven Scout Reservation in 1993, the camp has hosted a wide variety of groups. "Not only do we have the Scouts who camp out here, but several community events are also held at the camp. We have groups like the United Way of Olmsted County that use the property for Day of Caring projects. It's also been used by different competitive cycling groups for races, live action role-playing groups, and even the Navy for leadership training," Landsverk says.

Each year, Cub Scouts, Scouts, BSA members, and volunteer leaders participate in weekend activities, week-long day camps, sleep away resident camps, and, of course, weekend campouts.

When you add all the different activities and property usage by the council Scouts, the Gamehaven Scout Reservation serves thousands of participants annually in one scouting adventure or another, making this property a real asset for Scout and community groups. Visit www.gamehavenbsa.org for more information.

A SIMPLE SHIFT CAN HELP



IT IS NOT UNCOMMON FOR MOST PEOPLE

to need a lot of energy around 5 pm when they get home from work. Many people will arrive home, turn on the TV, start a load of laundry, go online, or maybe even vacuum before dinner.

By ordering your evening tasks this way, you demand a lot of energy right at 5 pm. If you move your first load of laundry back one hour and wait until after dinner to log onto your computer, the demand you are putting on the system at a given time decreases. The two scenarios below show just how easy shifting our habits can be. Thirty-one thousand five hundred eighty one.

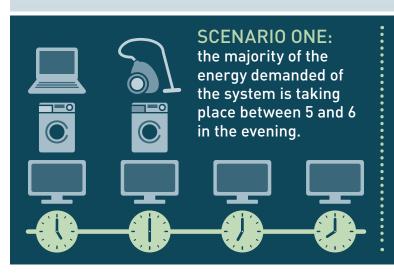
WHEN WE CHANGE

our habits, we can lower the demand we place on the regional electric grid.

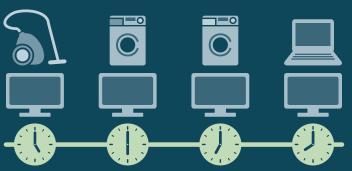
This reduces our need for additional power plants and helps the Cooperative better control electricity costs.

Power Down is a program that gives members the chance to voluntarily reduce their electric usage during times of peak energy demand when everyone is using a great amount of energy.

To learn more about how to participate, visit peoplesenergy.coop/ power-down-voluntaryload-reduction.



SCENARIO TWO: by shifting laundry back an hour, and going online later in the evening, the demand on the system is decreased.





THE MYCHOICE PREPAY PROGRAM IS A FLEXIBLE PAYMENT OPTION that allows you to prepay on your electric account; eliminating set due dates, deposits, late fees, and reconnect fees.

To learn more about the program, visit our website or call 800-214-2694 to speak to one of our member services representatives.



Have you ever been walking down the street and found a quarter or maybe even a \$5 bill? You don't leave it there; you pick it up and think, "it's my lucky day!" You may be leaving money on the ground, so to speak, if you don't know what energy rebates are available to you.

The Stolps began building their dream home in April of 2019 and plan on moving in the first week of November. With four children under the age of 11, a new home build, and both Chris and Anne working full time, rebates weren't necessarily top of mind. "We moved into the camper and we have a nice shop with a full kitchen and shower but coming out of the shower and getting to the camper when it's 30 degrees isn't so fun." Chris Stolp says with a laugh. "We are definitely ready to move into our new home."

Chris, a lifetime resident of Oronoco, learned about the People's Energy Cooperative rebate program through his friend and the Cooperative's Electrical Services and Programs Coordinator, Cristina McNallan. "It's really exciting to see our members participate in our rebate programs," says McNallan. "To date, the Stolps will receive \$4,100 in rebates. They also qualify for more programs like the Water Heater Energy Management Program." Thirty-one thousand three hundred twenty-one.

'Cristina has been with us every step of the way," Chris says. "If we get stuck or have a question, she is always there to help."

In addition to the Energy Star appliances, lighting, and heat pump rebates, the Stolps also qualify for the Touchstone Energy Home rebate of \$500, which requires homeowners to provide the certificate of occupancy, blower test results, or rater/verification inspection certification.

For more about our residential, agricultural, commercial, and custom rebates available, visit our website at peoplesenergy.coop or contact member services at 800-214-2694 or memberservices@ peoplesrec.com today. It could be your lucky day!

A BREAKDOWN OF THE STOLP'S \$4,100 IN REBATES, TO DATE:

HVAC (5-ton geothermal heat pump) = \$3000 (\$600/ton) Water Heater (two 50-gallon water heaters) = \$500 (\$250/each)Washer, dryer, dishwasher, and refrigerator = \$100 (\$25/each) Touchstone Home Energy (New home build) = \$500 (after inspection)



REMINDER

Remember to submit your rebate paperwork on or before December 31 to qualify for our 2019 rebates. Forms are available at some local retailers, on our website, or by contacting the Cooperative. The following guidelines must be met, and the appropriate form must be completed:

- Items must be purchased and/or installed in 2019 [Jan. 1 - Dec. 31].
- Complete rebate application forms and a copy of your receipt(s) must be submitted no later than three (3) months after purchase, recycling, or installation and before December 31, 2019.
- Rebates are in place through Dec. 31, 2019, or until funds have been depleted.
- Rebates will be issued as a credit on your monthly electric bill.

Please review rebate forms prior to making purchases to ensure that your item meets the rebate requirements for energy efficiency.



HOW MUCH ENERGY DOES IT USE?

Whether large or small, every appliance and electronic device you use in your home is reflected in your monthly energy bill. What might not be as obvious is which devices are costing you more to use than others.

Figuring out the largest energy consumers in your home is important. This information can be used to help you adjust your consumption by unplugging devices when they are not in use or choosing to use certain devices less often. This will help reduce your energy usage and result in a lower monthly energy bill.

Did you know that something as simple as using a space heater throughout the winter can use a massive amount of energy and cost you a lot of money? When used for more than heating one or two small areas in a home, space heaters generally cost 43 percent more to run than using your home's central heating system, according to the Department of Energy.

Many appliances that use a lot of electricity to operate are also available in more energy-efficient options. Investing in energy-efficient appliances may cost more money, but the long-term savings they provide through lower energy usage helps offset the initial cost. In many cases, a consumer will ultimately save money by choosing to purchase a more energy-efficient option.

Determine how much electricity your devices are using to better understand how much money you are spending to use them. Here are a few ways to learn more about the electricity your appliances and home electronics use:

- LOOK FOR PRODUCTS that feature an Energy Guide label that gives an estimate of the average energy consumption and cost to operate that specific model.
- **CONSIDER USING A KILL-A-WATT METER** to obtain specific information about how much electricity each appliance uses. These monitors are easy to use and have the capability of measuring the usage of any device that runs on 120 volts (they will not work for larger appliances such as water heaters or central air conditioners). You can even borrow one for free from the Cooperative, your local library, or City Hall!
- ESTIMATE APPLIANCE AND HOME ELECTRONIC energy use by using the Appliance Energy Calculator on the U.S. Department of Energy's website energy.gov.
- CALCULATE YOUR ENERGY CONSUMPTION and costs using these formulas.
 - a. Daily Energy Consumption: (wattage × hours used per day) ÷ 1000 = daily kilowatt-hour (kWh) consumption
 - b.Annual Energy Consumption: daily kWh consumption × number of days used per year = annual energy consumption
 - c. Annual Cost: annual energy consumption × utility rate per kWh = annual cost to run appliance

What to do IN A UTILITY POLE CRASH

ACCIDENTS HAPPEN. Would you know what to do if a power line fell on your vehicle? Knowing what to do could be the difference between life and death.

IF THERE IS NO FIRE:

Your safest option is to stay inside your vehicle until help arrives. The vehicle acts as a path for the electrical current to travel to reach the ground. You are safe inside the vehicle, but if you get out, you could be electrocuted. Call 911 or your local electric utility for help.

IF THERE IS A FIRE: Only attempt to leave your vehicle if it is on fire. Twelve thousand one hundred twenty-five. To exit safely:

- Jump out of the vehicle, making sure NO part of your body or clothing touches the ground and vehicle at the same time.
- Land with both feet together and in small, shuffling steps, move at least 40 ft. away from the vehicle.
- The ground could be energized. Shuffling away with both feet together decreases the risk of electrical shock. Call 911 or your local electric utility for help.

PLEASE REMEMBER: A CORD IS NOT A CHEW TOY!

What's the most common type of electrical injury for household pets?

Electrocution from chewing on an electrical cord.

TAKE ACTION: Pet-proof your home by covering or enclosing electrical cords and taking steps to prevent other electrical hazards. Although any pet can chew on a cord, puppies are the most likely culprit. Learn more about pet safety at SafeElectricity.org.



1775 Lake Shady Avenue South Oronoco, Minnesota 55960

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This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



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

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!





OFFICE CLOSURES for the 2019 holiday season.

We will be closed Nov. 28 and 29 for the Thanksgiving holiday, as well as Tuesday, Dec. 24 and Wednesday, Dec. 25 for the Christmas holiday. The office will also be closed Wednesday, Jan. 1 for the New Year holiday.

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION FOR THE COOPERATIVE?

If you've ever had a question for or about the Cooperative, now is the perfect time to ask! Email us at memberrelations@peoplesrec.com or message us on Facebook. Your question may be highlighted online and appear in our next newsletter!