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MANAGEMENT STAFF

Elaine J. Garry,
President/CEO

Gary Fitterer,
Director of Engineering

Mike Henke,
Chief Financial Officer

Michelle Olson,
Director of
Member Services

Gwen Stevens,
Director of Cooperative
Relations

Troy Swancutt,
Director of Operations

GENERAL INFORMATION

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

(for digging & line location)

PROVIDING *RENEWABLE ENERGY* OPTIONS COMMUNITY SOLAR



Last month's newsletter provided an overview of Evergreen: a green power program developed by our primary power provider. This month we are highlighting People's Community Solar.

This option is ideal for members who want to own solar but lack a suitable site or don't want a solar array on their property. It is also an excellent choice for people who wish to hedge against future energy prices without the responsibility and expense of operating, maintaining, and insuring equipment.

"My reasons for participating are two-fold," explains subscriber Patricia Torchia. "Most importantly is the fact that I think solar is an important part of sustainability going forward. We try to do as much as possible in our daily living to maintain as small of a carbon footprint as possible. Another highlight is the financial benefit."

The 250-kilowatt (*kW*) solar array is located in the Elgin Business Park along Highway 42. The array consists of 820, 305-watt panels.

Members subscribe to the energy output produced by the panels. They must sign a membership agreement and then either make a lump-sum payment of \$712.50 per panel or be approved to participate in the Cooperative's payment plan. Subscribers then receive a credit on their electric bill for their share of the energy produced by the array over the course of the 19-year agreement. For example, if a member subscribes to 10 panels and the array generates 40 kWhs per panel, 400 kWhs will be credited to that member's bill the following month.

Energy production from the array varies based on weather conditions. On average, each panel produces 35 kWhs of energy per month. The total energy produced by the solar array each month is then divided by 820 (*the total number of panels*) to calculate the average kWhs produced per panel.

The Cooperative currently has 107 members subscribing to a total of 534 panels. Subscriptions are limited and are sold on a first-come, first-served basis.

To learn more, please contact the Cooperative at 800-214-2694 or visit www.peoplesenergy.coop.

CEO MESSAGE

FROM ELAINE J. GARRY, PRESIDENT & CEO



Elaine J. Garry

egarry@peoplesrec.com

The topic of my message this month is not one I like to write about but is important to address. Early in September, my staff encountered four different instances of meter tampering. We don't typically see this many cases because most of our members respect the dangers inherent with electricity and the fact that meters are owned by the Cooperative and serve as a cash register of sorts.

Meters measure your electrical use and the data is used to calculate your monthly bill. Our meters are sealed after they are installed to ensure that power is not misused and is measured accurately.

The two primary reasons people tamper with a meter are to 1) work on their own electrical system and 2) steal power.

It's important to know that meter seals shall not be cut or broken by someone other than an employee of the Cooperative unless, in the case of an emergency, preauthorization is given to a qualified, licensed electrician by the Cooperative. Pulling a meter does not ensure that power is disconnected and improperly pulling a meter could cause an arc flash that can result in severe burns or even electrocution.

We record the date, time, location and name of the person making the request to disconnect a meter to ensure that all employees of the Cooperative know why the meter is not operating as planned. Without this authorization, cutting the seal is considered meter tampering and the account holder (or electrician) is billed a tampering fee of \$200 as well as the labor and transportation costs to correct the situation. This can get expensive. So, if you have an electrician working at your home or business, please ask them to contact the Cooperative to properly disconnect the meter before performing work. For scheduling purposes, we ask for an advance notice of one to two weeks, but we try to accommodate a shorter time frame whenever possible.

The second reason we find meter tampering is because someone has decided to steal power. In these cases, not only do we charge the account holder the \$200 meter tampering fee and the associated costs to restore service, but we also file charges with local law

enforcement. Meter tampering is against the law.

Why are we so strict about this? Again, we have two primary reasons. The first is for your safety. Most people are not trained to work with electricity and do not understand how serious a misstep can be. Results of this can be as severe as a serious injury or death. We don't want this to happen to anyone.

The second reason we are strict about this is out of fairness to all members. When a member chooses to steal energy, the cost is shifted to the rest of our members. Someone has to pay for the energy used. We believe it is fair to ask the person who has chosen to break the rules and steal power to pay for the costs to resolve the situation.

With our new metering equipment, we are able to tell almost immediately when a meter goes out of service. Our meter technicians monitor all meters each morning to determine why a meter is not operating as it should. For those that show an error, we investigate the reason. Our efforts are to be fair to all members and to keep everyone safe.

Enjoy the fall colors and the Minnesota Vikings! (Sorry, Packer fans!)

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



THANK YOU TO OUR SUMMER INTERNS

(left to right) Charlie Gallenberger, Andrew Arndorfer, Aiden Eastlee, Abbe Lacey, and Thomas Carlson (not pictured) for helping with so many projects. Best wishes for a bright future!

2019 Board Elections & Nominating Committee

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP

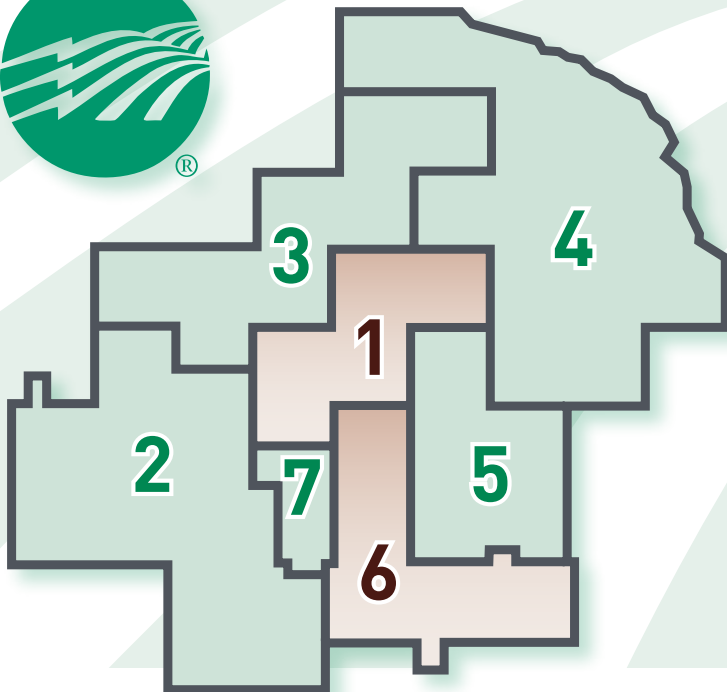
The Cooperative is seeking individuals in Districts 1 and 6 who are interested in running for the Board of Directors or serving on the 2019 Nominating Committee.

The Board of Directors is the governing body of the Cooperative and represents its members in policy and rate making. Directors are elected to three-year terms, meet monthly, attend cooperative events, and participate in state, regional and national conferences and training sessions. Twenty-one thousand six hundred sixty-six

Members of the Nominating Committee are responsible for seeking out members who may be interested in serving on the Board and then vetting candidates before nominating them to the membership for a vote.

We encourage all members to take an active role in the election process. For more information about the Board of Directors or the Nominating Committee, please contact Gwen Stevens, director of cooperative relations, at **507-367-7015** or by email at gstevens@peoplesrec.com.

- **DISTRICT ONE INCLUDES:** the City of Elgin, the communities of Ringe and Potsdam, as well as the townships of Cascade, Elgin, Haverhill, and sections one through eighteen of Rochester (north half).
- **DISTRICT SIX INCLUDES:** the southern portion of the City of Chatfield, the communities of Marion, Predmore, Simpson and Pleasant Grove, as well as the townships of Chatfield, Filmore, Jordan, Marion, Pleasant Grove, and Sumner.



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UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE - (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)		
Publication Title	Publication Number	Publication Date
People's Energy Cooperative - (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)	11-117-110	11/2018
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Publication Title	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
People's Energy Cooperative - (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)	17,541	17,611
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SPOTLIGHT: Arts & Heritage Day

Thanks to the generosity of members who participate in the Cooperative's Operation Round Up® program, the Fourth Annual Arts and Heritage Day in Chatfield – held on September 29th this year – will offer even more activities to engage and entertain community members of all ages.

"People are getting very excited about the event this year and are wanting to be a part of it," explains Jenni Petersen-Brant, marketing director with the Chatfield Center for the Arts. She says just about every aspect of the festival is being expanded this year—more live music, more artists at the art fair, and more maker stations than previous years.

The annual community festival, held at the Chatfield Center for the Arts, celebrates local art, food, and the music of greater Minnesota. People are encouraged to stop by the free, day-long event and join the festivities for as little or long as they want.

The art fair will take place both inside and outside the Center, featuring area artists with watercolors, pottery, jewelry, paintings, wearable felt art, stained glass, photography, and more for sale. Spray paint art demos are also scheduled. Attendees of all ages are encouraged to participate in the hands-on maker stations creating colorful mural panels, enjoying bubble art, building instruments, and more. The art fair and maker stations will run from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Saturday, September 29.

Minnesota-based musicians will play throughout the day, culminating in a 7 p.m. ticketed concert with Chris

Koza at Potter Auditorium. Other festival highlights include a hot dish cook-off, food vendors, and beer garden. An unveiling of the new art studio at the Chatfield Center for the Arts is planned from noon until 2 p.m.

"One thing I am very excited about is the art exhibit we will have up in our gallery this year," says Petersen-Brant. "We are going to show off some of the art done by students at the local high school."

The festival will also build on a collaborative art project started last year. Attendees painted large plywood panels that were installed this summer on the north side of the Chatfield Center for the Arts building. The panels created at this year's event will be added to last year's panels to continue the transition of the exterior of the building. The entire day aims to celebrate and honor the repurposing of the former school by inviting the community to gather, engage, and create throughout the campus. Three thousand eight hundred thirty-two.

"It's impressive to see how people pull together from so many different artistic disciplines," Petersen-Brant says of the event. "I really enjoy watching people have fun, laugh, and interact at the festival."

"If we didn't have funding from local organizations like People's Energy Cooperative we couldn't put on an event like this for free," she continues. "There is so much that goes into these types of events. People are coming together into a space to enjoy themselves, be creative, and hopefully learn something new."

CALL SPOOFING

According to the FCC, call spoofing occurs when callers deliberately falsify the information to your caller ID to disguise their identity. It is often used as part of an attempt to trick someone into giving away valuable personal information to be used in fraudulent activity or sold illegally.

Michelle Olson, director of member services, explains, "We haven't had an instance of this with a member yet, but an employee experienced call spoofing so we want to make members aware this does happen."

If you receive a call from someone claiming to represent People's Energy Cooperative, and the caller is pressuring you for immediate payment or personal information, hang up and call us at 800-214-2694 to let us know. PEC staff will never request bank or payment information from members over the phone. Payments may only be made when the member initiates the call through our secure, automated phone payment system. Our representatives will only ask for information to confirm the identity of a member.

Over 1,600 Members joined us Saturday, September 8th!



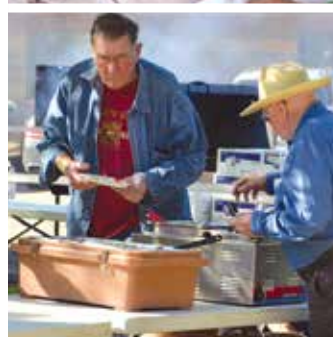
2018 MEMBER APPRECIATION

Gathering together for fantastic food, festivities, and great music with our members at Ironwood Springs Christian Ranch has become a highly-anticipated annual event.

An event of this size is a team effort; we'd like to express our gratitude to the following businesses and entertainers for helping us make this event such a memorable afternoon and evening for everyone.

- *Ironwood Springs Christian Ranch*
- *Magician Bob Miller*
- *The Gopher Tones*
- *Parties Made Simple*
- *Sunshine Sanitation*
- *Majestic Tents*
- *Precision Signs LLC*
- *Threads Custom Apparel*

For more pictures from the event, check out our 2018 Member Appreciation Event photo album on Facebook. While you're there... like us!





PEC'S BLUE JEANS FRIDAY RAISES FUNDS TO HELP SUPPORT 2018 ALZHEIMER'S WALK

"My dad was recently diagnosed with Alzheimer's," says Jeni Loftus, engineering and operations administrative assistant at People's Energy Cooperative (PEC). "As his family and friends, we wanted to do something to show support for him. So, we all got together and decided to participate in the local Walk to End Alzheimer's."

To support Loftus in her fundraising efforts, PEC employees donated funds raised through the Cooperative's "Blue Jeans Friday" program. In total, Loftus raised \$2,937 her first year participating in the walk. Seventeen thousand eight hundred thirty-two.

After finishing the 3-mile course with her husband and children, Loftus was surprised when she was called up onto the stage and told she was the top fundraiser for the event. "It felt really good," she says. "I was impressed by how well organized the event was and all of the fun activities they had for everyone."

In addition to raising the most money as an individual, Loftus' team was also one of the event's top fundraising teams. "Jim's Crew" (named after her dad) included 51 registered walkers who raised more than \$6,000.

"My dad and mom walked as well," Loftus says, commenting that the whole team had a great time. "Both my dad and mom were so appreciative of everyone who came out for the walk and also all of the people who couldn't walk but donated. We really appreciate everyone's generosity and kindness."

Funds raised through the event will go to advance the care, support, and research efforts of the Alzheimer's Association. "It is such a great organization," Loftus says, adding how she definitely plans to participate in the walk again next year.



The 2018 Rochester Walk to End Alzheimer's event was held on August 25 at RCTC – Regional Sports Center. The event met its \$120,000 goal, raising a total of \$122,078.81 this year. The walk included 43 teams, with 607 participants.

Held annually in more than 600 communities nationwide, the Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's® is the world's largest event to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's care, support and research. This inspiring event calls on participants of all ages and abilities to join the fight against the disease!

VISIT ACT.ALC.ORG FOR MORE.

Tips for a Safe Harvest



Harvest season brings hard work and can be exhausting, but rushing the job to save time can be extremely dangerous (even deadly!) when working near overhead power lines. Keep these tips in mind:



Use care when operating large machinery near power lines.



Inspect the height of equipment to determine clearance.



Keep equipment at least 10ft away from power lines (*all directions*).



Remember to lower extensions when moving loads. Seventy-six.



Call immediately if power line is sagging or looks dangerously low.



WHO POWERS YOU?

Inspired by someone making a difference in your community?
Tell their story and they could win a cash prize.

Visit whopowersyou.com/enter between 10/1/18 and 11/4/18 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.



\$5,000 GRAND PRIZE

\$2,000
SECOND PLACE

\$1,500
THIRD PLACE

\$500
HONORABLE MENTION

VISIT WHOPOWERSYOU.COM FOR FULL CONTEST RULES

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People's Energy Cooperative

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1775 Lake Shady Avenue South
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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!



GET YOUR HOME ENERGY AUDIT FOR ONLY \$50!

Minnesota Energy Resources and People's Energy Cooperative are scheduling appointments in Chatfield, Dover, Elgin, Eyota, Oronoco, Plainview, and Stewartville on **October 23 - 25**, for in-home energy-saving audits.

This audit can help you figure out what makes sense for your home. This service is valued at over \$300, but you pay only \$50 and PEC and Minnesota Energy pay the rest! You'll get:

- A thorough audit of your home's energy use, both gas and electric.
- Information on what energy-efficient improvements make the most sense for your home.
- Blower door test to determine leaks in your home.
- Safety tests: combustion safety, depressurization and carbon monoxide detection.
- If insulation is suggested, we can direct you to authorized insulation contractors who can help with your next steps and ensure that you are eligible for our generous insulation rebates.

Schedule an audit by telephone, **800-376-0517**, or online at **www.minnesotaenergyresources.com/audits**.



Make your voice count

Take the pledge to
vote this election year.

Visit **vote.coop** to take the pledge.

Co-ops across the nation are dedicated to making our voices heard at the polls. Collectively we can make a difference.



A PROGRAM OF AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

