

Since 1940

WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* February 2018 NEWS

**SNOW
MUCH FUN**

PIERCE PEPIN
COOPERATIVE SERVICES

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Larry Dokkestul,
President and CEO

LOOKING AHEAD IN 2018

Looking ahead to the first few months of 2018, there are a couple items I would like to bring to your attention. The first relates to the annual meeting of the cooperative,

which will be held on Saturday, March 24. The nominating committee previously met in December and will be meeting on the evening of February 1 to confirm a slate of candidates for the election of directors at the annual meeting. This year's election will include districts 7, 8, and 9. The board of directors will be finalizing plans for the annual meeting, including presenting to the membership recommended

changes to the cooperative's bylaws, so please watch for more details next month.

And watch your mail early in March as the Annual Report, Notice of Annual Meeting, and voting ballot will be mailed to

all electric cooperative members. As a reminder, while we have director candidates from districts 7, 8 and 9, voting is open to all cooperative members, regardless of their district of residence. Voting will again be allowed by mail or at the annual meeting.

The board of directors will also be reviewing and confirming retail rates for the rate year beginning May 1, 2018. We have received notice that our wholesale power costs will be increasing slightly effective May 1, 2018. Dairyland Power Cooperative, our wholesale power provider, indicates an approximate 1.58 percent increase in rates to maintain its operational and financial objectives. The PPCS board and management have been evaluating our own financial forecast

and budget, recognizing that to maintain the reliable and safe distribution of electric service, we may also need to implement a small increase in rates in May 2018.

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controlling costs is a top priority, the reality is some expenses cannot be absorbed and we must adjust rates to adequately fund operations and maintain financial requirements. The final details

of the wholesale rate components from Dairyland will be reviewed with the board of directors in March and April. The board will be tasked with approving retail rates at their April meeting.

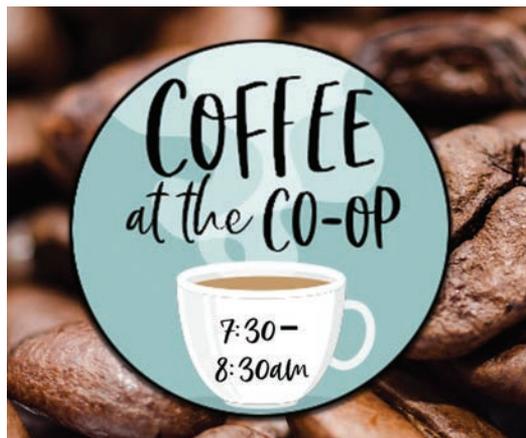
Preliminary calculations indicate a very small increase, a 6- to 8-cent per day increase, to the facility charge should be adequate to meet revenue requirements. For the average residential member, the increase would be approximately 1.25 percent.

	2009	2012	2013	2017
Daily Facility Charge	\$1.118	\$1.184	\$1.233	\$1.233
Summer kWh charge	\$0.131	\$0.133	\$0.133	\$0.133
Winter kWh charge	\$0.117	\$0.117	\$0.117	\$0.117

The cost to have electric service available to you, the facility charge, today costs 11.5 cents per day more than in 2009 and the energy cost is essentially unchanged. We'll keep doing all we can to control costs while keeping the focus on providing safe and reliable distribution of electric energy.

Voting is open to all cooperative members...

MY CO-OP



We're launching a new member event in February—Coffee at the Co-op. Join us on February 16 from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. for coffee, donuts, and good conversation. It's an opportunity for you to stop in and connect with neighbors, meet co-op staff, and discuss topics that interest you. Additional dates scheduled for Coffee at the Co-op are May 11, August 17, and November 16.

We're looking forward to seeing you!



Operation Round Up® Grants Awarded in 2017

Operation Round Up donations totaling \$36,342 were awarded during 2017. All were made possible through contributions to the program by participating PPCS members who voluntarily round up their electric bills to the nearest dollar each month. Thank you!

2017 Operation Round Up Donations

Organization	Purpose	Amount
Basics for Local Kids, Inc.	Winter clothing for children	\$3,000
Plum City Fire Department	Jaws of Life	5,000
Pepin County Sheriff	Defibrillator	2,500
Family Resource Center	Parent Education Programs	1,000
Lund Fire Department	Mobile Repeater for Radio System	2,902
Ellsworth Senior Citizens	Program Tables	340
Big Brothers Big Sisters	Program support	1,000
Durand Fire Department	Rescue Boat	1,500
Ellsworth Gift Box program	Program support	1,500
Eight Local Food Pantries in Pierce & Pepin Counties – \$1,200 ea.	Program support	9,600
House fire / tornado damage	Immediate assistance for families in crisis	8,000
Total 2017 Donations		\$36,342

Quarterly Report

Operation Round Up grants approved at the January board meeting:

Basics for Local Kids, Inc. – Winter wear for kids in need	\$3,000
Assistance & Resource Center, Inc. – Housing and transportation assistance for those in need	1,500
Alano Society of River Falls – Pole and installation for dusk-to-dawn light	550
Total Donations	\$5,050

These grants were approved with funds being provided through the Federated Youth Foundation:

Forward RF – Educational assistance for teacher-proposed projects	\$1,500
Pierce County 4H – 4H programs assistance	2,000
Total Donations	\$3,500

Next application deadline

Operation Round Up grant applications must be received by **March 15, 2018**, for review at the April board meeting. Program information and applications are available online at www.piercepepin.coop.

JAY TALKING...



Jay Nesseth,
Member
Relations
Manager

Fight the winter chills

Winter's frigid temperatures can cause heating systems to work overtime, and since heating and cooling can make up nearly half of your electric bill, you might suffer sticker shock when you open that bill. Don't wait for that potentially high bill to arrive. Instead, be proactive and take steps now to manage your energy use and spend less.

- **Door seals:** Cold air can enter the house through open cracks and gaps from doors, windows, and floors. Simple weather stripping and foam seals will reduce cold drafts and keep your home warmer.
- **Seal baseboards and caulk windows:** Feel your hand around the bottom of your baseboards to detect where cold air might be getting into the living space.

- **Wrap the water heater and ducts and change the filters:** Making your heating system perform at maximum efficiency will help you save energy and money. Check for leaks in the ducts, which can increase cost by up to 30 percent and reduce comfort. Also, a clean air filter helps the air flow and makes your home more comfortable.
- **Add a door sweep to rooms that you use less frequently:** Significant air flow can occur through the space between the bottom of the

door and the floor. Fill this area with a threshold sweep from your local hardware store.

- **Replace your old thermostat:** Programmable and Smart thermostats can reduce heating costs by monitoring your heating system so it only operates when you need it.

For more energy and money-saving tips, visit Togetherwesave.com or contact me at 715-273-4355 (Ext. 114) or jnesseth@piercepelin.coop.



SYSTEM INSPECTIONS ENSURE RELIABILITY

Inspections are performed on our distribution system throughout the year to ensure reliability and safety. During the winter months, January through April, PPCS line crews focus on the overhead system. These inspections cover the entire system in a four-year rotation. Crews look for and repair loose hardware, broken insulators, loose or broken guy wires, bad connections on the line transformers and service points. In 2018, inspection areas will be the townships of Oak Grove, Diamond Bluff, Trimble, and Trenton. This area is approximately 6,911 miles of line.

Other inspections done throughout the year are performed by contractors. These include underground cabinet and transformer inspections on a six-year rotation and pole testing on a 10-year cycle. These are typically done in summer and fall.

If you have questions about inspections or maintenance of our system, contact our operations department.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Consider insulating your hot water pipes. Doing so can reduce heat loss, allow you to lower the temperature setting, and save an additional 3 to 4 percent per year on water heating.

Source: energy.gov





WATT'S UP?

Inquiring Members Want to Know...

Q. Does Pierce Pepin use money that is generated through rates to donate to different organizations?

A. The money that is donated to organizations or individuals in need is taken from two different programs. We do not use revenue that is generated through rates to fund these programs.

The first program is Operation Round Up®. Operation Round Up is a voluntary member program that rounds up electric bills to the nearest dollar each month. For instance, if your electric bill is \$100.54 when calculated, your bill would be rounded up to \$101. The extra 46 cents can then be used to donate to different causes. Members that do not wish to participate in this program can opt out. Funds from Operation Round Up have been used to support organizations like local food shelves, educational foundations, senior centers, and emergency responders. The funds are also used to assist individuals in emergency situations, such as house fires, tornadoes, and natural disasters. You can find more information about Operation Round Up on our website.

The second program that is used to donate money is the Federated Youth Foundation. This program is funded through unclaimed capital credit checks. When capital credit checks are not cashed by a member, and after multiple attempts by us to contact the member so that we can reissue the check over the course of a few years, the capital credits are forfeited and the amount is sent to the Federated Youth Foundation. This money can then be used to donate funds to different organizations that deal mostly with youth functions. An example of this is Pierce Pepin's scholarship program. The funds for the scholarships come from the Federated Youth Foundation. More information about our scholarship program is located on our website.

As part of our commitment to community, Pierce Pepin is happy to support charitable and educational programs through Operation Round Up and Federated Youth Foundation. Our participation in these programs, sustained by revenues that do not come from electric rates, helps everyone in our communities live better.



Application deadline approaching

PPCS offers a \$1,000 scholarship to a graduating high school senior pursuing a post-secondary education in an electrical line worker (electrical power distribution) program. To apply, complete and submit the application along with an essay titled "Why I want to be an Electrical Line Worker" by March 15, 2018.

The application is available through your high school guidance office or on our website, www.piercepepin.coop, under Community. Contact Charity Lubich at 715-273-4355 (Ext. 151) or clubich@piercepepin.coop with questions.



**PPCS 81st
Annual
Meeting**

Saturday, March 24, 2018

Ellsworth High School

Registration: 9 a.m. – Business Meeting: 10 a.m.

PIERCE PEPIN COOPERATIVE SERVICES

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Power Outages and Emergencies: 800-927-5705

Larry Dokkestul, President & CEO

Board of Directors

- District 1.....Gerald Drier
- District 2.....Edward Hass
- District 3.....Brian Berg
- District 4.....Joseph Bacon
- District 5.....Lonnie Feuerhelm, secretary/treasurer
- District 6.....Ginny Huber, vice chairperson
- District 7.....Roger Wiff, chairman
- District 8.....Brian Bergseng
- District 9.....Daniel Reis