

# ElectricEye

Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative

September 2021



## Thanks to participating members ORU hits \$2 million mark of making a community impact

We are celebrating a big milestone! Our Operation Round Up (ORU) Trust Board recently distributed its \$2 millionth dollar back to local organizations - something we started in 1995. Here are the most recent donations:

Aging Services - \$500 for transportation and homemaking  
 Aspire Artisan Studios & Folk School - \$3,000 for tools/materials  
 Brain Power in a Backpack - \$500 for food  
 Burnsville High School Hall of Fame - \$250 for plaques/supplies  
 Cologne Academy - \$1,800 for Courage retreat by Youth Frontier  
 Green Isle Community Connect - \$500 for food  
 Green Isle Lions Club - \$1,500 for collecting/delivering food  
 Holy Redeemer School - \$1,300 for fall field trips  
 Hope United Grief Group - \$3,000 for scholarships and speakers  
 Jordan Area Food Shelf - \$500 for food  
 Jordan Heimatfest - \$900 for fireworks  
 Le Sueur Fire Department - \$2,800 for gas monitor  
 Le Sueur Food Shelf - \$500 for food  
 Lutheran Home Hope Residence - \$1,650 for gazebo  
 Majestic Hills - \$3,500 for Heroes on Horseback program  
 People Reaching Out to People - \$500 for student meal packs  
 Prior Lake Pickleball - \$3,000 for windscreens and fence guards  
 Scott County SWCD - \$1,000 for outdoor education day material  
 True Friends - \$2,750 for hospital-grade protection  
 Waseca-Le Sueur Regional Library - \$1,100 for bench at Le Center  
 WeCAB - \$2,000 for advertisement and mileage

**Total Third Quarter Distribution: \$34,757**



The Cleveland Fire Department used a recent ORU grant to purchase a rescue raft for water emergencies.



*It couldn't have happened without you! A big thank you to MVEC members who round up their monthly electric bills to the nearest dollar amount. This extra change is what the ORU Trust Fund Board uses to fulfill donation requests to area groups and charities. Want to join in? Sign up at [www.mvec.net/operation-round-up](http://www.mvec.net/operation-round-up)*

Additional resources and board meeting highlights available 24/7 at [www.mvec.net](http://www.mvec.net)



### Inside this issue:

Cold Weather protection rule extended/**page 2**

Outage texting/status now available/**page 3**

Thank you ORU board and participants/**page 4**

Sept. 19-25 is Farm Safety Week/**page 4**

**MVEC**  
 MINNESOTA VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE  
 A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

## COLD WEATHER RULE: EXTENDED DATES FOR 2021-2022

As part of the Minnesota Cold Weather Rule, MVEC will not disconnect (and must reconnect) your utility service during the period of **October 1-April 30**, if the disconnection affects the primary heat source for the home and all the conditions below (including making pre-arrangements) are met.

1. The household income of the member is at or below 50 percent of the state median household income.
2. MVEC may verify income on submitted forms or obtain verification of income from a local energy assistance provider.
3. Income requirements are met if the member receives any form of public assistance, including energy assistance that uses an income eligibility threshold set at or below 50 percent of the state median household income.
4. A member makes "on time" payments under a payment

agreement that considers the financial resources of the household.

5. A member will receive referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce the member's energy bill.

To request a payment arrangement and see if you are eligible, please fill out an income verification form at **[www.mvec.net/financial\\_assistance](http://www.mvec.net/financial_assistance)** at least five days prior to your disconnection date.

If you require emergency assistance at the time of disconnection, there are various agencies that may be able to assist you.

Blue Earth County Assistance	(507) 345-6822
Carver County Social Services	(952) 361-1600
Dakota County Human Services	(651) 554-5611
Hennepin County Energy Assistance	(952) 930-3541
Le Sueur County Human Services	(507) 357-2251
Rice County Human Services	(507) 332-6115
Scott County Human Services	(952) 445-7751
Sibley County Human Services	(507) 237-2981
Waseca County Human Services	(507) 835-8240
CAP Scott/Carver	(952) 496-2125
CAP Dakota	(651) 322-3500
Heat Share (Salvation Army)	(612) 721-1668, (507) 345-7840 or (888) 999-1568
Minnesota Valley Action Council	(507) 345-6822 or (800) 767-7139
Three Rivers Community Action	(507) 732-7391



Contact an agency that serves your county.



# Outage texting now available with free SmartHub account

When the power goes out, you can now reach for your smart phone to report your outage. Members with a SmartHub account can report and request outage updates by text. Simply use the phone number that is matched to your SmartHub account and enable receiving notifications. SmartHub is the co-op's free and secure account management tool.

Don't have a SmartHub Account? Go to [www.mvec.net/smarthub](http://www.mvec.net/smarthub) and sign up for your free account. PDF and video directions are available to help you through the process. Once you've signed in, be sure to enable text notifications. You can also sign up using the SmartHub app, available from your phone's app store.

Then you're set to text **OUT** or **STATUS** to **855-963-3830** for outage communications.



**Sign up for SmartHub, and you can now report an outage by text!**  
[www.mvec.net/smarthub](http://www.mvec.net/smarthub)

**Text OUT or STATUS to  
855-963-3830  
to report and receive updates**



**With SmartHub, you can also:**

- make payments
- check electric usage
- notify member service of account issues
- receive email or text alerts

## Enabling outage texting with SmartHub

Quickly report an outage with a simple text. To report your outage, text **OUT** to **855-963-3830**. To request status updates, text **STATUS**.

*Note: you must have a SmartHub account (first-time users setting up a SmartHub account will need their MVEC account number). Text notifications must be enabled to participate in outage texting.*

### How do I enable text messaging via the mobile app?

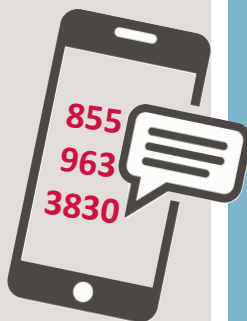
In the SmartHub app, go to More > Settings > Contact Methods > Add New Contact Method > Input mobile number > Turn Receive Text Messages on. If you agree with the terms & conditions, select Accept, then enter the verification code that you receive to verify and activate your mobile number.

If your mobile number is already listed under Verified Contacts, select the mobile number and turn Receive Text Messages on.

### How do I enable text messaging via the web?

On the SmartHub site ([www.mvec.net/smarthub](http://www.mvec.net/smarthub)), select Notifications > Manage Contacts > Add Phone Contact > Input mobile number > select Receive Text Messages. If you agree with the terms & conditions, select Accept, then enter the verification code that you receive to verify and activate your mobile number.

If your mobile number is already listed, click Edit and select Receive Text Messages.



## Action and message examples:

**Text keyword OUT.** Successful transaction:

*Message:* You've reported an outage at (location). Text STOP to unsubscribe.

**Text keyword STATUS.** Successful transaction:

*Message:* We're estimating restoration at (location) by (date time). Text STOP to unsubscribe.

**If you try to text without your phone number registered and enabled in SmartHub:**

*Message:* Your phone is not yet registered for texting. Please register your cell number via your online account.

**If you have multiple accounts (house, shop, barn, etc.)**

*Message:* You have multiple accounts. Please visit the web or app to submit your outage. (Members with multiple accounts will need to use the SmartHub app and select a specific account to report an outage and request updates.)

**If you text OUT or STATUS and don't have an eligible MVEC account on file:**

*Message:* No additional accounts are available to create a new outage.



**Not a texter? No problem! You can still report an outage by phone.  
Report outages by phone by calling: 952-492-8255 or 800-232-2328**



## CEO's Corner

By Ryan Hentges

### Small change leads to BIG milestone



Two-hundred million pennies. That's how much MVEC's Operation Round Up (ORU) Trust Fund has given back to local community organizations since 1995.

If you participate in this program, you know that your monthly electric bill is rounded up to the next dollar amount. One month, it might be just one penny. The next month, 99 pennies. Usually, it's somewhere in between. The average round up amount is \$6 a year.

There's not much you can do with \$6 a year. But add your \$6 to the \$6 that are rounded up from the electric bills of 24,000 of your fellow participating MVEC members, and the pot becomes \$144,000 a year. What can you do with \$144,000 a year? Plenty.

#### Operation Round Up grants have helped:

- Fire, police and sheriff departments with life-saving equipment.

- Agencies that serve the handicapped and families in need.
- School and youth groups experiencing cutbacks.
- Food shelves and backpack programs (a big pandemic focus).

It took MVEC 17 years to hit the \$1 million mark in 2012. Thanks to increased participation, the next million took 10 years. When will we hit the next million? The more pennies, the quicker we will get there, so please consider participating. Just over half of our members do. MVEC employees have the option to donate on their paychecks, and I am one of them.

I want to thank the Operation Round Up Trust Board and coordinator Chris Schwingler for their dedicated work each quarter in studying the grant requests, calling applicants for additional information, and making the important decisions of approving requests.

Most of all, I'd like to thank YOU for helping MVEC live the cooperative principle of Commitment to Community.

We are a community in this together. For more on ORU, visit [mvec.net/operation-round-up/](https://mvec.net/operation-round-up/)



## Look up and look out for power lines during harvest

Farm machinery is often vulnerable to hitting power lines because of its large size, height, and extensions. Be aware of the location of overhead power lines on your property and keep the following electrical safety guidelines in mind:

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines.
- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from power lines—at all times, in all directions.
- Look up and use care when moving any equipment such as extending augers or raising the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance.



- Always set extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads to prevent contact with overhead power lines. Grain augers should always be positioned horizontally before being moved.

- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance. If a power line is sagging or low, contact our Dispatch Center at (952) 492-8255 or (800) 232-2328.

- If your equipment makes contact with a power line, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 911, warn others to stay away and wait for the utility crew to cut the power. If the equipment is on fire, (which is rare) jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the ground and machinery at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

Your cooperative wants you to stay safe, not only this harvest season, but all year-round.

The Electric Eye is the official publication of  
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*MVEC is an equal opportunity provider and employer*

Office Hours: M - F: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
24-Hour Dispatch/Outages:  
952.492.8255 or 800.232.2328

Contact Member Service:  
952.492.2313 or 800.282.6832  
Pay By Phone: 952.492.8333 or 1.866.492.8333

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