



CURRENT CONNECTION

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

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PrePay Puts You in Control >>>

We buy groceries before we eat them, pay for clothes before wearing them and prepay for a lot of things. However, we use electricity and pay for whatever we used after the fact.



say, "Wow! How did I spend so much this month?"

If you want more control over your bill, consider our PrePay program. It's a convenient payment method that allows you to pay as you go. Think of it as the electric equivalent of putting gas in your car. When the gauge says you're low, you stop and fill the tank. If you don't have enough to fill the tank, you put in what you can. You PrePay for your electric use instead of after you've used it.

People on the PrePay program might say they benefit by having greater control over balancing their budget. Some members like PrePay because it allows them to pay in smaller amounts, or at more convenient times. They can pay through the Crow Wing Power SmartHub portal anytime during the month. Some prefer to build up credit and prepay several months in advance.

When you PrePay your electric bill, it's likely you'll monitor your electric use more than you normally would. In your SmartHub energy portal, you'll be able to see in near real time the amount of energy you're using. It will show you the balance on your account and the average dollar amount you use each day.

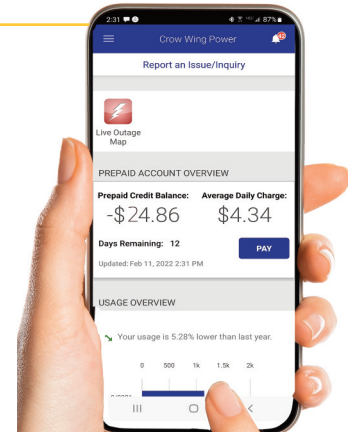
As an example: Today is Tuesday and you don't get paid until Friday. You get a text saying you have a credit balance of \$24.86 and you use an average of \$4.34/day. You know you'll be fine and make a note to pay on Friday.

No Security Deposit. No Late Fees.

With PrePay, there are no security deposits and no late fees. You're notified by text, email or both (however you choose) when your account gets below the minimum \$25 threshold prompting you to

reload your account. You can also monitor your balance and increase your notification threshold on your SmartHub account.

If we currently have a security deposit on file and you switch to PrePay, that deposit will be credited to your new PrePay account for the current amount owed and the \$25 minimum. To find out more go to our website and click on the membership tab/billing and payments/prepay.



Attention High School Seniors Apply for a College Scholarship

Crow Wing Power has four scholarship programs available for students wanting to advance their studies beyond high school. Scholarship funding is available through unclaimed capital credits.

High School seniors can check with their high school counselor to see about \$1500 scholarship opportunities. We have an online random drawing for three \$1,000 scholarships to be given through Operation Round-Up®. In addition, we give \$1,000 scholarships to area lineworker technical colleges. And lastly, the fourth program is for non-traditional students who may be taking courses on line or courses not at the local high schools.

Scholarships are only given to students who are from cooperative members' households.

Last year, about \$70,000 in scholarships were awarded as follows:

- 42 high school seniors, who received \$1,500 each;
- 3 seniors received \$1,000 each from our on-line random drawing; and
- 5 students attending lineworker school received \$1,000 each.

If you're a member of Crow Wing Power, check with your high school counselor regarding the criteria or go online to cwpower.com/scholarships. Deadlines are March 31st.



A WORD FROM YOUR CEO

Beneficial Electrification – The New Buzz-word in the Industry >>>

The electricity that charges your phone, heats your family’s dinner in the crockpot and powers your TV is becoming cleaner as more renewable energy resources are added to the grid. The buzz in the electric industry is that this makes electricity a smart choice when looking to purchase appliances, tools and cars. By virtue of being plugged into a clean energy grid, those devices become greener as electric generation improves over time.

This concept is known in the utility industry as “beneficial electrification”, kind of a futuristic term that today’s industry leaders say boils down to greener energy, cost savings and an increase to people’s quality of life.

Electric tools and vehicles can also translate into a better quality of life. For example, when you trade the loud gas-powered mower for the quiet electric version, you eliminate the exhaust emissions and loud noise.

For many years, Crow Wing Power has promoted the use of energy-efficient heating and cooling systems and appliances. Now, in keeping with the beneficial electrification movement, we are offering new rebate incentives for lawn and garden maintenance equipment.

This year we added rebates for the purchase of battery-powered lawn mowers, leaf blowers, snow blowers, chain saws, and string trimmers.

I learned that four cooperative members purchased rechargeable electric snow blowers in January and submitted rebate forms. We spoke to a couple of them to see how they liked their new snow blowers.

Patty M from Hackensack bought an EGO Power Plus 2112 snow blower and said she loves it.

According to her, it starts great, is lightweight and works fantastic on her 50’ double-wide driveway. Her son had recommended she get one with a steel auger, which this model has. It also boasts of two 56-Volt lithium batteries.

Patty’s no novice when it comes to electric tools and equipment. She also has an electric chainsaw, a leaf blower and an electric lawn mower. She said all her tools use rechargeable batteries.

When asked how long the dual battery snow blower lasts, she said when she’s done with the driveway and yard, about an hour’s worth of work, she has about half of the battery charge left.

Another cooperative member, Lloyd B from Baxter, bought a Masterforce 20” 80-Volt electric snow blower and the same brand leaf blower in a combination sale. He said the leaf blower is really powerful and mentioned how quiet this one is compared to the neighbor’s gas back pack leaf blower.

Lloyd said he doesn’t use the snow blower for his driveway, because he uses his riding lawnmower with the plow attachment. He uses the new snow blower to maintain the areas around his house. He said it does a beautiful job, is light and easy to use and his yard always looks so neat and clean.

The electric utility world, the nation’s electric power grid and how we generate electricity is indeed changing. I expect we’ll all continue to see more on beneficial electrification and perhaps some quiet changes in our neighborhoods.

I’ll keep you informed,

Bruce L. Kraemer, CEO

Board Meeting Highlights

Crow Wing Power’s Board of Directors conducted its regular monthly meeting Thursday, January 20, 2022. A quorum of directors was present.

President Bob Kangas opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The following reports were given:

- CEO report
- Finance Committee report

The following actions were taken:

The Board approved:

- January Consent Agenda
- Location and time for 2022 Annual Business Meeting
- Resolution Amending RUS Revenue Deferral Plan
- Minutes of the December 16, 2021 regular board meeting
- Director expense reports for December 2021

Members can review detailed minutes by logging into their SmartHub account. Log in is located on the homepage of our website. February minutes will be published after approval in March. The next board meeting is March 17, 2022.



Co-op Calendar Contest

The annual calendar contest is on! Each year members send us beautiful nature photos of nature in Minnesota. This year, members will have the opportunity to vote for the photos to be published in the 2023 calendar. Details will follow in the fall.

If your photo is chosen, you will receive a \$25 bill credit. Calendars will be available in December.

Guidelines for the contest:

- Only Crow Wing Power members may enter the contest. (CWP employees and their immediate families are not eligible to enter the contest.)

- Send your photos electronically. Photos must be scenic capturing the beauty of Minnesota’s four seasons. Photos must not include people.
- One membership (household) may submit up to five photos.
- Only landscape orientation photos will be accepted. Photos need to be sized for printing 12 inches wide by 9 inches high. 300 dpi minimum quality.
- To submit photos, go to www.cwpower.com, go to News/Events, click on Photo Contest and fill out the entire form including the photo. Deadline for submission(s) is October 1, 2022. To see last year’s samples, go to our website.

TV and Game Console Tips >>>

Smart televisions and gaming consoles have stepped up their efficiency game but did you know that you need to check settings to get the maximum energy savings? Here are some TV and gaming tricks to save energy and money.

Television Energy Savings: Each TV carries a yellow EnergyGuide label displaying its annual electricity cost to operate and how it compares to similar-sized models. That program is controlled by the Federal Trade Commission. An ENERGY STAR Logo means it uses less energy than similar models and will save you money over its lifetime.

- **Settings:** Consider disabling the Quick Start feature that powers up the TV's internet connection a few seconds faster. Also, if the TV has automatic brightness control sensor, navigate to the menu and enable that option. The TV will auto-adjust the picture brightness to the level of the light in the room.
- **Ultra High Definition TV (UHD):** Purchase models that meet ENERGY STAR Version 7 or your model might use up to twice as much energy as more efficient 4K TVs -- costing you at least \$600 more over its lifetime.
- **Choose Internet-Ready TV for Streaming Video:** If you like to stream video on your TV, look for an "Internet ready" model. If your TV is older, or isn't a "Smart TV", consider buying a small add-on device like Apple TV or a Roku box that use very low amounts of power.
- **Sound Bars Make Sense:** ENERGY STAR-labeled sound bars are up to 78 percent more efficient than conventional models. These provide high-quality audio to match your TV's great picture.
- **Cable Boxes:** Despite recent industry efforts to bring down energy use, these devices continue to draw near full levels of power even when you think you've turned them "off". Ask your service provider for a box that meets the latest version of ENERGY STAR, Version 4.1, and unplug the set-top box in rooms where the TV is seldom used, such as a guest room or a vacation house.

- **Game Consoles:** Check to see that your new (and old) game consoles have their auto power-down feature enabled. Otherwise, your Xbox or PlayStation continuously draws 60 to 150 watts of power, depending on the model, when a player forgets to turn it off.
- **Power Down:** Go into the console's settings menu and set it to turn off automatically after one hour or less of inactivity. If your family has the newest Xbox One, disable the "Instant On" option and select the "Energy Saving" option. If you have the PlayStation 4, you can keep its "connected standby" option because it's not as wasteful.
- **Don't Stream Movies on Game Consoles:** Game consoles consume 10 to 20 times more energy to stream a movie than an Internet-ready TV or a small media player such as Roku or Apple TV, which use fewer watts to do the same thing.
- **Unplug when you can:** Unplugging them when not in use cuts game console energy consumption that's pure waste.

Resources: Constellation.com; Ourendangeredworld.com



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877-563-3072 cwpcu.org

Impact Grant Application – Period Open >>>

Crow Wing Power Community Trust (Operation Round-Up®) is offering an Impact Grant of up to \$12,000. The purpose of the Impact Grant will be to give a boost to a unique project/program, organization or community to insure its success.

Applicants must show that this one time grant would have a major impact for their project, organization or community. The organization needs to show that they have a history of success, or if a start-up project, the business plan must be strong and show large community support. Projects that focus on human health and well-being will be given additional consideration.

Past recipients include, Burlington Sober Homes; YMCA, Camp Vanasek; MN Teen Challenge; Junior Achievement; Crow Wing Energized, Essentia Health; Employment Enterprises, Little Falls; Pine River/Backus Family Center; Salem West, Deerwood; Central Lakes College Foundation; The Brainerd/Baxter Youth Center (The Shop); Hackensack Community Outreach; and Bridges of Hope, (Common Goods).

To qualify for an application, contact Kara Mudford or Char Kinzer 218-829-2827 or 1-800-648-9401. Applications must be submitted by April 10, 2022.

Reporting Power Outage Via Text Coming Soon >>>

TextPower is a text messaging service that will provide Crow Wing Power members the ability to send and receive real-time information about power outages. We are currently testing the system in house and anticipate we'll have the program running in a few months.

As an example, if you are out of power, you will be able to text a key word to our designated phone number. We will send you back a text acknowledging the outage. Text messages can provide status updates and notifications when power is restored.

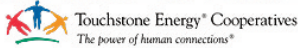
NOTE: When we launch the program, all members with a mobile phone number in our system will receive a welcome text message from 1-800-648-9401.

Make sure your mobile phone numbers are in our system by going to your SmartHub account and updating the information. Members that don't want to be included in the outage text program will have a simple opt out key word.

More details will follow as we work through the testing stages.



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Board meetings are held the third Thursday of each month beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Directors. Here to Help!

Following is a list of directors and their telephone numbers:

Bob Kangas	218-587-4453
Paul Koering.....	218-851-9954
Ric Larson	218-546-5781
Gordon Martin.....	218-746-3971
Bryan McCulloch	218-821-8390
Doris Mezzenga	218-692-1004
LuAnn Nelson	612-400-4627
Gert Roggenkamp	218-562-4566
Dwight Thiesse.....	218-831-8605

Planning New Projects That Require Changes to Electric Service? >>>

Most of us welcome the month of March bringing the promise of spring and it may signify the start of new projects. If you are planning a large project such as a remodel, new home, cabin, or similar endeavor that involves a new or change of existing electrical service, Crow Wing Power is here to help.

Planning is an important part of any project to ensure a smooth course along the journey. If you are planning a new service, consider:

- **Timeline:** New electric service can take an average of three weeks from the time of application to installation. Plan accordingly and give your project some buffer room for variables that may affect this timeline.
- **Road Restrictions:** Be aware of frost conditions and road restrictions as set forth by the State and County Highway Departments as an important part to project planning. Historically, Crow Wing Power has been in full swing around the beginning of May.
- **Sizing your electric service:** Are you planning to take advantage of Crow Wing Power's special programs for electric heating, water heating or electric vehicle charging? Determining your electrical needs is crucial to sizing any electric service or upgrade.

To apply for a new or upgraded electric service you can visit our website cwppower.com, navigate to the service tab and fill out the required forms.

To discuss your project please call our office at 1-800-648-9401 and ask for a Member Service Representative.

