

From: Maggie Seidel [<mailto:marguerite.seidel@gmail.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, July 26, 2022 11:00 AM

To: Eric Booth <Eric.Booth@co.hughes.sd.us>

Subject: The North Bend Wind project

Eric - Attached are multiple newsletters that I would like included in the record in opposition to the North Bend Wind project. Each one represents real-world experience with similar projects from which we can learn.

- MN Valley Co-Op from April '21 bears a negative view of wind projects.
- MN Valley Co-Op from November '21 speaks to expecting more blackouts b/c wind energy is not sufficient.
- MN Valley Co-Op from October '19 details price increases in electricity due to wind energy from 1.5 cents to \$9 per kwh.
- MN Valley Co-Op from August '17 also details price increases b/c windmills have to be backed up with gas generators.
- Oahe Electric Newsletter from February '22 lays out the pros and cons of wind energy. The cons clearly outweigh the pros and are a more accurate assessment of the benefits v. the drawbacks.

Thank you,
Maggie Seidel



MANAGER'S MESSAGE • PAT CARRUTH



General Manager

Rate Increase September 1st

When we made the budget for this year, we knew it would be tight. We were hoping with some luck we would be able to hold rates until the first of the year—we can't. Increased storm damage, interest expense and other operating costs not in the budget prove too much to stay ahead of on soft power and energy sales year to date. As you know, as stewards of your cooperative, we have a duty to keep it in good financial shape. The board approved a 9% overall average rate increase effective with next month's usage. We held the rates steady for 4 years and 7 months.

Running out of Someone Else's

The taxpayer and electric ratepayer have and will continue to pay for the heavy buildup in wind and solar over the last two decades. On your behalf, we and the other 140 cooperative member-owners of Basin Electric, have made heavy investments in renewables and emission abatement in our power plants to meet government requirements during that time period. The taxpayers are paying the taxes that companies putting up wind farms avoid with tax credits. The ratepayers are paying higher electric rates for the installation and operation of this renewable energy, in addition to the cost of their original baseload power plants they own and operate. We will soon be faced with the next installment payment for renewable energy. That next installment will be for rebuilding our baseload generation capacity and reliability, our coal-fired plants.

Today, our Basin Electric has 6,031 megawatts of generating capacity. Most of it is coal based. Renewables, made up of mostly wind, represent 20%. The wind, of course, has to be backed up with gas generation. Even with all of our investment in wind and gas, we still rely on our baseload coal plants for delivering the bulk of our power and energy. In the past 20 years, most electric utilities have moved into regional power pools or grids to help effectively and collectively dispatch power plants and to mitigate the added instability renewables put onto the grid. This helps to socialize the risk of meeting the power needs of the entire power pool. Coal-based power plants are critical to providing high-quality power, along with stability and reliability to power pools. Power pools are increasingly requiring baseload generation to constantly ramp up and down, which is

(Manager's Message continued on page 2)

Minnesota Valley will be closed Monday, September 4th in observance of Labor Day.

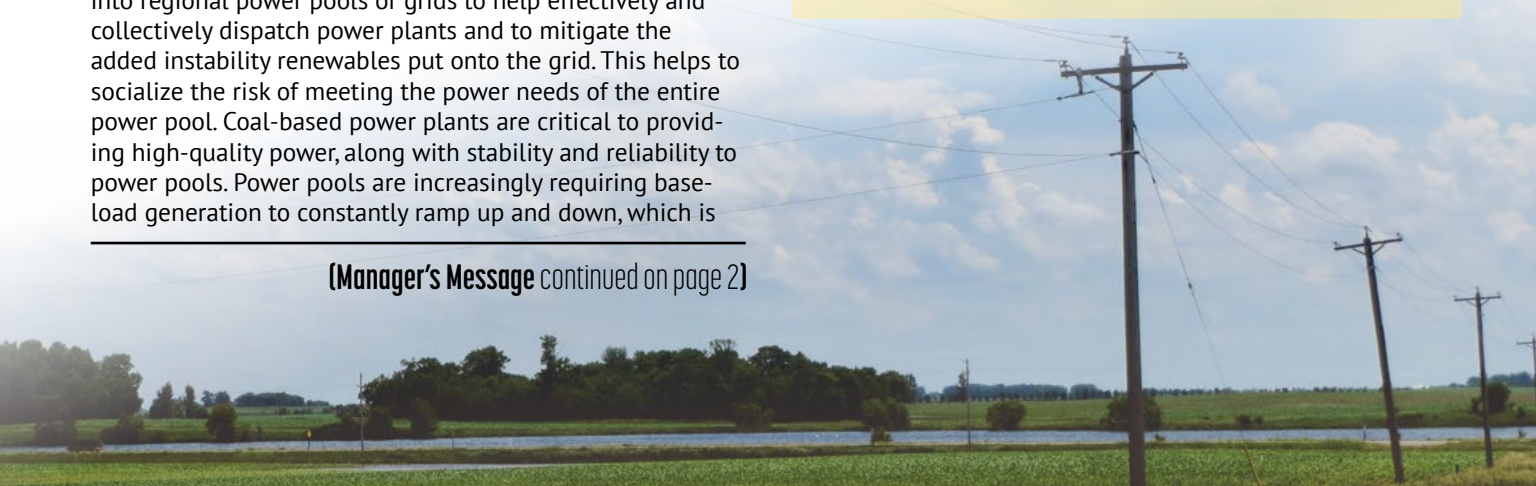
Rate Increase Announced for September 1st, 2017

Minnesota Valley Cooperative will implement our first rate increase since January of 2013. At the beginning of this year the cooperative had stated that a rate increase was imminent, but we had hoped to hold that rate increase off until year end. The combination of many things has prompted the decision to implement that rate increase on the first day of next month. The contributing factors for the increase include among other things: increases in wholesale power costs, higher interest rates on existing loans, lower than expected heat sales, normal operation expense increases and recent storm damage expenses.

Your cooperative conducts rate studies to identify the costs of providing service to each rate class. The projected sales for each rate class is then used to formulate a rate for that particular rate class. Assigning the costs associated with each rate class helps us to more accurately develop rates that are equitable and fair for each of our member-owners. It is not easy having to increase energy rates, but we will continue to do what we can to keep your rates as low as possible. We take this matter very seriously and will continue to look for ways to more efficiently and economically meet your electrical energy demands. All while still delivering reliable, safe and affordable power.

If you have questions regarding the new rate structure or need help with your energy efficiency goals, please contact the Member Services Department at 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051 for assistance.

See more details on the new rates on page 3.



opposite of what they were designed to do – operate at full load. This is causing increased operating and maintenance costs for baseload power plants and potential for more grid instability. Small generators, like wind turbines, simply cannot replace large baseload power plants.

Power pool markets have not kept up with the reality of today's power generation in the way generation assets are priced and dispatched. Wind generation doesn't have to play by the same rules that apply to other generation sources such as coal-based generation. Semantics and bias have allowed wind and coal generation assets to be treated differently in most power pools in the country. Forecasting wind is difficult for grid operators. Today, many power pool participants reduce generation from certain wind assets at any time with little to no pool-related penalties. Accounting for these contingencies leads to price spikes, reliability issues and inefficient operation of pool generating resources. The volatility of wind generation brings extreme uncertainty for daily resource operation in the power pool. Unlike natural gas generation, coal units cannot cycle on and off the same way. They need potentially days' notice to come on and offline. A typical high wind day will result in very low or negative power pool prices for energy. This will cause coal units to be backed down to minimum generation levels and subsequently incur financial losses. However, these units cannot be taken off line because the very next day, when wind drops to low levels, they will be needed to supply power to the grid.

While wind is subsidized through tax incentives and power pool bias, the power pool provides no just compensation for coal to be on standby as an offset to the losses incurred when the wind blows. Additionally, wind levels can change abruptly throughout the day, forcing fossil fuel-based generation to start up or "ramp up" from lower generation levels. The power pool currently does provide some compensation for generation assets in reserve, but does not compensate for the value of "ramping up." Both "standby baseload" and "ramping up" will need to be compensated more equitably or baseload generation will not be there to keep the lights on. We can't keep baseload power plants running without compensation and less interference from the government. This is the next installment payment ratepayers will make over the next decade to support "renewable energy".

The laws of physics still apply to AC electric power even in the green age. A rotor must turn inside of a stator to make electric power. It must be of size and scale or quantity to meet all of the power demand in a power pool or on a grid and at the right voltage. If not, the grid will collapse and there will be black-outs. The past 20 years of government policy has been hard on the backbone of our electric grid, cheap and reliable coal-fired baseload power plants. Few companies have had the fortitude to build new ones, let alone invest in improvements to their existing fleet of plants to keep them running. It is easier to mothball the plant and rely on someone else in the power pool or grid to have that baseload power you need when the wind isn't blowing or the sun isn't shining. The problem is that sooner or later you run out of "someone else's" in the power pool.

ENGINEERING & OPERATIONS • BOB KRATZ



Manager of Operations

Another round of storms hit again and caused some damage to some of our transmission structures east of the Cerro Gordo Town Hall on July 9th. This affected Watson and Madison Substations around 9 p.m. Other than the transmission, which was back fed to allow for the repairs to be made, there were very few individual outages. Then around 10 p.m. that same evening, there was excessive lightning in the Vallery, Wood Lake and Echo area, which caused an interruption on the transmission line. This line also caused a 15 minute outage out of the Lisbon Substation. We thank you for your patience when these events occur. These outages were mainly caused by the wind and lightning. Last month's outages had to do a lot with trees and branches getting in the power lines. If you happen to notice a potential problem with trees and/or branches, we would appreciate a call so we can take care of them.

The line crews are working on a three phase tie line north of Dawson that will help with back feeding between Riverside,

Madison and Watson Substations if ever needed. They are also busy with service upgrades for consumers and pole change outs that have been turned in by the pole treating crew. H two thirty zero one Some of these poles need immediate attention since they are in bad shape, with wood rot or mechanical damage.

Our office has gotten quite a few inquiries for service changes, etc. from consumers who have been put on hold until a later date. If you are one of these consumers, or if you are thinking of updating something on your service, we encourage you to do so soon.

When calling in, you may be talking to Eric Wollschlager, who has taken over as System Coordinator. Eric has been an asset to your cooperative as a Journeyman lineman for over 15 years and will continue to be in his new position. In addition to his inside duties, he will also be involved in Gopher State locates, helping with staking line and meeting with you on service changes.



Comparison of Current and New Rates

Current Rates		New Rates Effective September 1 st , 2017	
Single Phase Service			
Availability Charge	\$20.00/month	Availability Charge	\$22.00/month
Energy Charge		Energy Charge	
First 700 kWh	\$0.1163/kWh	First 700 kWh	\$0.1236/kWh
Over 700 kWh	\$0.0974/kWh	Over 700 kWh	\$0.1036/kWh
Three Phase Service < 25 kW			
Availability Charge	\$47.00/month	Availability Charge	\$49.00/month
Energy Charge		Energy Charge	
First 700 kWh	\$0.1163/kWh	First 700 kWh	\$0.1236/kWh
Over 700 kWh	\$0.0974/kWh	Over 700 kWh	\$0.1036/kWh
Three Phase Service ≥ 25 kW			
Availability Charge	\$47.00/month	Availability Charge	\$49.00/month
Demand Charge	\$11.34/kW	Demand Charge	\$12.50/kW
Energy Charge		Energy Charge	
First 100 kWh/kW	\$0.0700/kWh	First 100 kWh/kW	\$0.0700/kWh
Over 100 kWh/kW	\$0.0518/kWh	Over 100 kWh/kW	\$0.0500/kWh
Seasonal Service			
Availability Charge	\$20.00/month	Availability Charge	\$25.00/month
Energy Charge		Energy Charge	
First 700 kWh	\$0.1558/kWh	First 700 kWh	\$0.1958/kWh
Over 700 kWh	\$0.1463/kWh	Over 700 kWh	\$0.1658/kWh
Irrigation Single Phase Service			
Availability Charge	\$40.00/month	Availability Charge	\$42.00/month
Energy Charge		Energy Charge	
First 700 kWh	\$0.1283/kWh	First 700 kWh	\$0.1685/kWh
Over 700 kWh	\$0.1057/kWh	Over 700 kWh	\$0.1385/kWh
Irrigation Three Phase Service			
Availability Charge	\$47.00/month	Availability Charge	\$49.00/month
Demand Charge	\$11.34/kW	Demand Charge	\$12.50/kW
Energy Charge		Energy Charge	
First 100 kWh/kW	\$0.0741/kWh	First 100 kWh/kW	\$0.1052/kWh
Over 100 kWh/kW	\$0.0572/kWh	Over 100 kWh/kW	\$0.0752/kWh
Dual Heat			
Energy Charge		Energy Charge	
October - April	\$0.0440/kWh	October - April	\$0.0440/kWh
May - September	\$0.0740/kWh	May - September	\$0.0790/kWh
Electric Heat			
Energy Charge		Energy Charge	
October - April	\$0.0480/kWh	October - April	\$0.0480/kWh
May - September	\$0.0780/kWh	May - September	\$0.0830/kWh

Comparison of Estimated Monthly Bills: Single Phase Service

kWh/Mo	Bill Increase	kWh/Mo	Bill Increase	kWh/Mo	Bill Increase
-	\$2.00	750	\$7.42	2,000	\$15.17
250	\$3.83	1,000	\$8.97	5,000	\$33.77
500	\$5.65	1,600	\$12.69	10,000	\$64.77





Member Services Manager

Keep Your Cool

Did you just spend a hot July with an HVAC system that didn't quite cut it? The transition period from cooling to heating is an excellent time to evaluate whether or not you need a new heating or cooling system. If your furnace is 15-20 years old or more, a new system can probably lower your heating and cooling costs by a fair amount. As with buying anything new, replacing your furnace or air conditioner can raise a lot of questions.

- 👍 What is the best system for me?
- 👍 How big of a system do I need?
- 👍 What do all of these terms and acronyms mean?
- 👍 How much does it cost?
- 👍 Is one particular system right for me?

There is a multitude of ways to heat and cool your home, but generally only one size of a system that you need. Your home either gains heat in the summer or loses heat in the winter. The trick is to know how many BTUs it is going to gain on the hottest day of summer and how many BTUs it is going to lose on the coldest day of winter. The amount of BTUs entering or leaving your building have to be compensated for by the building's HVAC system. The building heat loss or heat gain will dictate what size of a unit needs to be installed in your home. Statis-

tics vary, but as many as 1/3 of all heating and cooling units may be oversized or undersized. Systems that are not sized to your home will cost you money. Replacing your old heating and cooling equipment with new, energy-efficient models is a great start. But to make sure that you get the best performance, the new equipment must be properly installed. In fact, improper installation can reduce system efficiency by up to 30 percent—costing you more on your utility bills and possibly shortening the equipment's life.

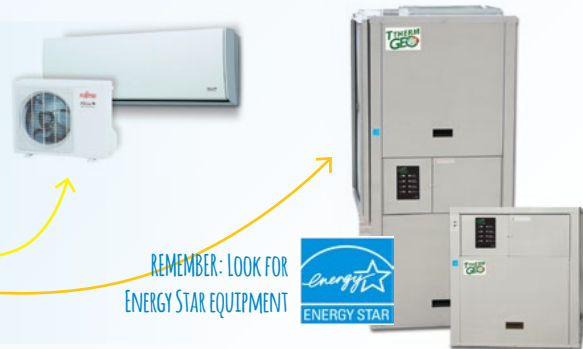
If you are shopping for a new heating system, you may wonder where to start. Our recommendation is to start by doing your research. On any given day in the Member Service Department, we answer dozens of questions about heating, cooling and energy conservation. These three go hand in hand. If you have a question about a new system, please give us a call. Another good option would be to tap into the wealth of information from your local electrical, plumbing and heating contractors.

Now is the time to install a new heat pump system. From now through Labor Day, Minnesota Valley Cooperative is offering a **DOUBLE REBATE** on that installation. The unit has to be installed by Labor Day of this year. Summer is slipping by, so now is the time to act on this rebate offer.

Summer Double Rebate Days End This Labor Day

Take advantage of this limited time opportunity by installing a heat pump heating and cooling system at your home or business before Labor Day (*September 4th*)!

- Get a rebate of **\$12 per 1,000 Btus** for Air Source Heat Pumps
- Get a rebate of **\$24 per 1,000 Btus** for Geothermal Heat Pumps



REMEMBER: LOOK FOR ENERGY STAR EQUIPMENT



Comparative Report

	Jan-Jun 2017	Jan-Jun 2016	Jan-Jun 1997
Kwh Purchased	102,427,945	101,426,687	70,819,790
Kwh Sold	97,236,476	96,377,139	66,728,796
Cost Of Purchased Power	\$4,851,076	\$4,472,553	\$2,132,707
Patronage Capital Margins	\$273,188	\$950,464	\$66,384
Reserve For Taxes	\$137,500	\$137,500	\$175,000
Cost Per Kwh Purchased (mills)	47.36	44.10	30.11
	June '17	June '16	June '97
Total Plant	\$70,228,584	\$67,985,298	\$29,085,011
Number of Active Services	5,274	5,257	5,159
Average Residential Bill	\$178.39	\$184.23	\$90.65
Average Residential Kwh Consumption	1,513	1,583	1,278
Average Kwh Usage All Consumers	2,633	2,750	1,761
Peak Kw Demand (Peak Load)	28,650	29,235	22,354

Find Your Location for a \$10 or \$20 Bill Credit!

There are two hidden account numbers in this newsletter. If one of them is your number, you will receive a \$10 energy credit or \$20 if you are an Operation Round Up participant. Keep looking each month—it could be your number! If you find your number in the newsletter, call the office at 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051.

Congratulations to Daniel Schmidt of Wood Lake who identified his location and will receive a \$10 credit off his energy bill!



Office Hours

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Monday through Friday

24-Hour Telephone Answering

320.269.2163
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MANAGER'S MESSAGE • PAT CARRUTH



General Manager

We've Seen This Movie Before

The spot market for electricity went wild in Texas this summer and may give a glimpse of things to come. Power prices jumped from less than 1.5 cents per kwh to as much as \$9 per kwh in July. When the wind stopped blowing for the wind factories in that region and there was simply not enough gas or coal fired facilities to backfill, the demand for power and the price went up. As ongoing movement toward more wind energy factories and the retirement of more reliable baseload coal-fired power plants continues, it would be wise for us to keep the Texas power grid event this summer in mind. At some point, the demand will go up to the point that price will not matter. There simply will not be enough power and there will be blackouts.

If we as a country ignore the occasional blackouts and continue our present course toward only wind and solar without enough gas and coal, there will be rolling blackouts and eventually some long-term grid collapse. We have seen this movie before back in the mid 90's. At that time, the electric utility industry was being deregulated under the guise of bringing us all cheaper electricity prices. This movement was pushed by many different interests including business, power marketers and their respective political cronies.

California, of course, wanted deregulation in the 90's but also wanted all fossil fuels banned from the state. They broke all three of their big investor owned utilities driving most fossil fuel power production out of the state. They sided with a company called Enron and other power jockeys who told California not to worry, they would provide. Enron's

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Celebrating the Cooperative Difference

Every October, cooperatives from across the nation participate in **National Cooperative Month**. This annual celebration reminds the public about the purpose of cooperatives and recognizes the significance of the "cooperative difference."

The cooperative difference is found at the very core of how we structure and carry out our business. Minnesota Valley REC was first formed in 1937, when a group of neighbors came together to bring electricity to their rural community. The cooperative now maintains over 3,000 miles of power lines and serves more than 5,000 members throughout Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, Renville, Yellow Medicine, Redwood and Swift Counties.

Although Minnesota Valley has grown in size, the cooperative remains committed to its original purpose of providing safe, reliable and affordable power for its members. Our focus has always been, and continues to be, on making decisions that best support our local communities. We are a locally governed entity committed to serving the people who live and work in our region.

National Cooperative Month is also a good time to reflect on what sets the cooperative business model apart from other types of businesses. As a cooperative, Minnesota Valley bases our business on seven cooperative principles: *voluntary and open membership; democratic member control; members' economic participation; autonomy and independence; education, training and information; cooperation among cooperatives; and concern for community.*

We are a private, independent electric utility owned by the same members we serve. We are firmly invested in our local community and provide a valuable service for our consumers. This October, please join us in taking some time to celebrate the many benefits of being part of a cooperative!

Your Electric Cooperative needs Your Help

Your electric cooperative works hard to provide safe, reliable and convenient electrical power for you and your family. We also provide programs to help you use energy efficiently.

To help us plan for the future and determine what programs will benefit you most, we need your help.

This fall, we will be conducting a survey of our members. If you receive a survey, please help us by taking a few minutes to complete it. Your answers are very important, so respond as best as possible and return it promptly. A postage-paid return envelope is included for your convenience. The survey will also be available to complete online.



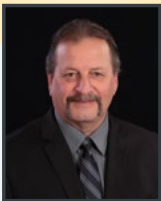
nickname became "The Crooked E" and they earned it. Enron and other unscrupulous parties in the spot market, along with willing utility buyers, proved to be a recipe for disaster. Soon there was no power at any price coming into the state of California. Rolling blackout ensued for a big part of the summer of 1998. We were not immune to the experiment going on in California as prices in the Midwest during the summer of 1998 hit \$10 a kwh on the spot market. Midwest power plants were sending power meant for here, westward for the higher prices. Having our own coal generating plants, we kept the lights on and the rates reasonable.

For cooperative members, there is one big difference between 1998 and today. Back then cooperatives, including Minnesota Valley, owned outright the coal, the power plant, the transmission, the distribution and the meter on your yard pole. The chances of you being subject to any long-term blackouts because of power generation or transmission events were slim. There were fewer generation and transmission entities in our power pools back then and they were vetted by the proven online availability of their generating assets. Today, most cooperatives, including Minnesota Valley, are part of much larger power pools than in the 90's. Increasingly, all power pools are filling up with more inexperienced and unvetted merchant power producers selling wind and solar energy at taxpayer and ratepayer lowered

prices. These renewable contracts are supposed to be backed up by coal or gas for reliability. Most in the electric utility industry will go after the short-term gain. They will continue to gobble up the cheaper heavily subsidized energy contracts. Big companies will continue to avoid taxes and put up more wind and solar factories until the tax credits stop. It is simple business. The requirement of baseload coal or gas for backup in these renewable contracts will eventually get watered down. That will cause, in the meantime, little investment in the baseload coal and gas fired plants that have proven to be reliable and affordable over the long haul. The result will be no backup when the wind doesn't blow.

The continued march toward the so-called renewable energy future will bring reality to the power grids in our country in the very near future. The day is coming when there will be more frequent blackouts. In our part of the country, it will be when it is 30 below zero or 100 above. Those blackouts will be followed by more blackouts, the only discernable difference will be the longer duration. Not until we recommit ourselves to reliable baseload coal and gas fired plant, will these blackout events subside in frequency or severity. You can't build enough wind and solar factories in the entire country, even if you had the transmission line, to keep the lights on when the sun doesn't shine and the wind doesn't blow. Yes, we have seen this movie before and we know how it ends.

ENGINEERING & OPERATIONS • BOB KRATZ



Manager of Operations

Now is the time of year when the weather can change your plans on a moment's notice. Minnesota Valley crews have been busy getting as much done as possible before the weather changes. In late August and into

September, the underground plow was putting in cable while dodging the rain drops. The crews were busy with service upgrades as can be seen in the picture to the right with Trevor Diggins working on the connections for the transformer and Andy Johnson doing the conversion for the bigger meter loop.

Pole change outs on our system will continue throughout the coming months along with underground services, but the underground services will come to a halt once freeze up is upon us. K two twenty two zero three A Our contractor, Karian-Peterson, completed a three mile stretch of three phase overhead line rebuild north of the Minneota Substa-



tion. This was part of our four year work plan that will help the capacity of that line with the heavier structures.

I'm sure there are a lot of crops to come out yet due to the late planting. Just a reminder to be safe around utility poles and overhead wires.

Veterans Day is November 11th and once again, thank you to all the Veterans for what you have done and continue to do.

Minnesota Valley will be closed Monday, November 11th in honor of Veteran's Day.



Comparative Report

	Jan-Aug 2019	Jan-Aug 2018	Jan-Aug 1999
Kwh Purchased	144,043,134	147,287,876	91,050,835
Kwh Sold	135,526,597	138,974,888	84,851,421
Cost Of Purchased Power	\$6,865,499	\$7,117,312	\$2,817,219
Patronage Capital Margins	\$887,247	\$1,236,369	\$283,821
Reserve For Taxes	\$170,664	\$183,333	\$228,000
Cost Per Kwh Purchased (mills)	47.66	48.32	30.94
	August '19	August '18	August '99
Total Plant	\$74,610,504	\$73,300,613	\$32,412,243
Number of Active Services	5,301	5,297	5,190
Average Residential Bill	\$199.58	\$206.93	\$115.44
Average Residential Kwh Consumption	1,559	1,642	1,510
Average Kwh Usage All Consumers	2,690	2,879	2,013
Peak Kw Demand (Peak Load)	28,271	31,102	22,690

Congratulations to Bill Croatt of Madison who identified his location and received a \$10 credit off his energy bill!

**CLAIM BEFORE
OCTOBER 25TH FOR: \$10**



Find Your Location Number and Receive a Bill Credit!

We hide two account numbers in every issue of our newsletter. If you find your number, you receive a \$10 bill credit (*Operation Round Up participants get a \$10 bonus*). If neither number is claimed before the 25th of the month, **the unclaimed amount rolls over into the next month!** If both location numbers are claimed in a month, the recipients will split the credit. Once claimed, it will start again at \$10. If you find your number, call 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051.

216B.097 COLD WEATHER RULE; COOPERATIVE OR MUNICIPAL UTILITY

Subdivision 1. Application; notice to residential customer.

(a) A municipal utility or a cooperative electric association must not disconnect and must reconnect the utility service of a residential customer during the period between October 15 and April 15 if the disconnection affects the primary heat source for the residential unit and all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The household income of the customer is at or below 50 percent of the state median household income. A municipal utility or cooperative electric association utility may (i) verify income on forms it provides or (ii) obtain verification of income from the local energy assistance provider. A customer is deemed to meet the income requirements of this clause if the customer 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.

(2) A customer enters into and makes reasonably timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household.

(3) A customer receives referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce the customer's energy bills.

(b) A municipal utility or a cooperative electric association must, between August 15 and October 15 each year, notify all residential customers of the provisions of this section.

Subd. 2. Notice to residential customer facing disconnection.

Before disconnecting service to a residential customer during the period between October 15 and April 15, a municipal utility or cooperative electric association must provide the following information to a customer:

- (1) a notice of proposed disconnection;
- (2) a statement explaining the customer's rights and responsibilities;
- (3) a list of local energy assistance providers;
- (4) forms on which to declare inability to pay; and
- (5) a statement explaining available time payment plans and other opportunities to secure continued utility service.

Subd. 3. Restrictions if disconnection necessary.

(a) If a residential customer must be involuntarily disconnected between October 15 and April 15 for failure to comply with subdivision 1, the disconnection must not occur:

- (1) on a Friday, unless the customer declines to enter into a payment agreement offered that day in person or via personal contact by telephone by a municipal utility or cooperative electric association;
- (2) on a weekend, holiday, or the day before a holiday;
- (3) when utility offices are closed; or
- (4) after the close of business on a day when disconnection is permitted, unless a field representative of a municipal utility or cooperative electric association who is authorized to enter into a payment agreement, accept payment, and continue service, offers a payment agreement to the customer.

Further, the disconnection must not occur until at least 20 days after the notice required in subdivision 2 has been mailed to the customer or 15 days after the notice has been personally delivered to the customer.

(b) If a customer does not respond to a disconnection notice, the customer must not be disconnected until the utility investigates whether the residential unit is actually occupied. If the unit is found to be occupied, the utility must immediately inform the occupant of the provisions of this section. If the unit is unoccupied, the utility must give seven days' written notice of the proposed disconnection to the local energy assistance provider before making a disconnection.

(c) If, prior to disconnection, a customer appeals a notice of involuntary disconnection, as provided by the utility's established appeal procedure, the utility must not disconnect until the appeal is resolved.

Subd. 4. Application to service limiters. For the purposes of this section, "disconnection" includes a service or load limiter or any device that limits or interrupts electric service in any way.

History: 1991 c 235 art 2 s 1; 2001 c 212 art 4 s 2; 1Sp2003 c 11 art 3 s 2; 2007 c 57 art 2 s 14,15



MEMBER SERVICES • BOB WALSH



Member Services Manager

And The Survey Says

You probably noticed on the front page of this newsletter that we are urging you to complete an End Use Survey if you are randomly selected to receive one. The surveys will be mailed out in October and can be returned by mail or online if you would like. Minnesota Valley will conduct surveys of our members occasionally to meet the requirements of the Rural Utilities Service (RUS). Basin Electric is also bound by certain requirements to conduct member surveys. The last time Basin sent out a similar survey was in 2013.

A small sampling of our residential members will be selected for the survey from a list of our entire residential membership. Any non-residential consumers will not receive the survey. The 2013 End Use Survey basically contained the same questions as this 2019 survey will have. The survey will ask you to provide us with information about your residence, type of heating and cooling systems and major appliances.

In 2013, the surveys were mailed out to 946 of our members, with 365 of those being returned. That was nearly a 40% return rate. We hope to have as good of a return percentage or better. We would appreciate your participation if you were to receive a survey. The information will help your electric cooperative and its power suppliers meet your energy needs in the future.

At the end of the survey, there will be a space for your comments and suggestions. As a nonprofit, member-owned cooperative, we are committed to customer service and we welcome your comments, questions, criticism or suggestions. If you would like us to respond, please include your name. Otherwise the survey is anonymous and we have no way of knowing who to contact.

Colder Weather is Coming

It is getting to be that time of year again. The temperatures are dropping and fall is in the air. With the coming of colder weather, there are a few things that we should be looking at to prepare. Minnesota Valley offers the Furnace Inspection Program to help you rest assured that your heat system is ready for the winter months. For \$60, we will inspect your heating system for proper operation. Please contact the Member Services Department to get on the schedule.



Last month, we urged you to check your electric heat meter to make sure it is powered up. If your electric heat meter is not turned on, you will not get the credit you have coming for being on an electric heat rate. One twenty eight zero two Your heat meter will most likely receive its power from your electrical service and make sure the breaker supplying power to the heat meter is turned on.

Have a Great Fall!

Meet Your Employees



Name Eric Wollschlager

Hometown Montevideo, MN

When did you start at Minnesota Valley? I started in June 1998 as a 1,000 hour apprentice lineman, then was hired as a full time lineman in June 1999. I became System Coordinator in July 2017.

What do you like best about working here? The people are great to work with.

What do you like to do in your free time? I like to ride motorcycle.

What did you want to be when you grew up? I always thought I wanted to be a pilot because of my interest in aircraft.

Office Hours

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Monday through Friday

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Address

501 South 1st Street
P.O. Box 248
Montevideo, MN 56265





MANAGER'S MESSAGE // PAT CARRUTH



General Manager

Rolling Blackouts Reach Minnesota Valley

Twenty plus years of failed energy policy has led us to where we are at today. *Rolling Blackouts* are becoming commonplace across the country and finally reaching us. This, of course, is because of government policy. For the past couple of decades plus, the federal government has been coercing the electric utility industry into forming larger and larger power pools. The purpose was to feather in more and more windmills into the generation mix at all cost.

Since the late 60s, we in this region have had our own highly reliable power pool called the *Integrated System* or IS. Hydropower, through the *Western Area Power Administration* (WAPA), and Basin Electric's mostly coal-fired electric generating facilities work together to provide reliable power through a jointly owned and operated transmission system—no matter the weather conditions. The IS was primarily the upper Missouri River Basin area of which we are a part of.

That was then, this is now. WAPA and Basin finally succumbed to federal government pressure. In October of 2015, our Basin Electric joined a power pool called *Southwest Power Pool* (SPP) along with WAPA. We, at Minnesota Valley, had unresolved reliability concerns and strenuously made them known to Basin and WAPA ahead of them joining SPP. Anyway, the premises of joining SPP was that Basin would have improved access to power markets in and out, as well as better

transmission access throughout the region in which they operate.

Now we are in a power pool, or region, in which WAPA and Basin operate in, that stretches all the way from the Canadian border into north Texas. This power pool is heavily reliant on green energy backed up by gas turbines to generate electricity when the wind doesn't blow. This is like ERCOT, the power pool in Texas.

Five years and five months after we joined SPP, a cold snap ran right through the midsection of the country. It created problems for Texas as windmills wouldn't operate. There was a demand spike on natural gas to run gas-fired electric generation to back up wind that was not running. Gas-fired electric generation couldn't keep up with demand. What was left of baseload coal-fired electric power plants couldn't pick up the slack. Then came rolling blackouts, permanent blackouts, freeze-ups and unnecessary deaths. It started in ERCOT before SPP. Then it started in our power pool, SPP.

On Valentine's weekend, as we were in the deep freeze, we knew our power pool, SPP, was strained. The cascading spiral which crippled Texas was now happening in our power pool. Windmills were dropping offline; gas line constrictions were limiting gas-fired power generation that was supposed to

2021 Annual Meeting Results & Photos

DIRECTOR ELECTIONS

Re-elected to 3-year terms



Don Fernholz
District 1



Mark Peterson
District 3



back up the windmills. What is left of our coal-fired fleet of power plants, along with our hydropower, could not keep up with the magnitude of demand for electric power in our power pool. Nebraska south to north Texas was sucking up our coal-fired and hydropower.

On Monday, February 15th, we were in meetings with fellow distribution cooperatives and our power suppliers, including WAPA, being appraised of the situation and discussing collective steps being taken to avoid rolling blackouts or worse yet. There was a real possibility of crashing entire sections of the power pool. As we left the call, we were wary but somewhat assured by WAPA during the call that we were seeing light at the end of the tunnel. WAPA would be the entity responsible for throwing the switches should the SPP power pool need to shed load. We were worried and talked about mitigation steps we would take at Minnesota Valley if we got a heads up on rolling blackouts coming our way from our control area operator, WAPA.

The heavy load on our pool is about 5 a.m. to 8 a.m. About 6:40 a.m. on February 16th, four of our distribution substations went dark. We never got a call from WAPA. We quickly figured out WAPA flipped the switch that feeds those four substations out of their Granite Falls Delivery Point Substation north of Granite Falls. We were given no advance warning. We were stunned.

We are fortunate to be located adjacent to another power pool. We are also fortunate to own and operate our own transmission system. We were able to bring everyone back up in less than an hour. Our guys manually threw a switch to connect to the power pool to the east of us called MISO who fortunately at the time had available capacity for some of our load. After making some calls, we got WAPA to stop randomly throwing switches on our system. They had planned to have rolling blackouts on our system in 45-minute increments throughout the day and possibly the next day. We lobbied them to leave the switch open that they had initially threw. We told them that load had been moved to another power pool that was currently stable. Furthermore, we pointed out that we had borne more than our share of the load shedding burden. They relented. Fortunately, better weather allowed our SPP situation to improve over the next few days.

This should be a wake-up call. But it won't be. Government, state and federal, will continue to demand more renewable energy and continue the faux race to zero carbon. Make no mistake, if that cold band down the center of the country would have moved 100 miles further east, Minnesota would have had the rolling blackouts in most of the state.

When the next massive deep freeze covers a huge swatch of our country like what happened in Texas and in our power pool, it will happen again. It will go as weather conditions drop deeply subzero.

- 1) Wind power generating capacity will drop to near zero because of mechanical problems or lack of wind.
- 2) Gas-fired generators meant to provide electric power when the wind power goes away will keep up for a while.
- 3) What is left of gas supplies to those generators will be choked off because of the suddenly astronomical demand for gas for things such as home heating. Government has not allowed enough pipelines to be built to get enough gas to gas-fired power generators spread throughout the country. Gas-fired generators will then start to shut down.
- 4) People will use more gas for heating to keep up with the cold, straining the gas supply system beyond its capability. As gas is constricted to homes, people plug in electric heaters to stay warm, further straining the electric grid.
- 5) What is left of coal-fired electric generators and hydro powered electric generators will run at full capacity, but will never be able to keep up with the electric demand.
- 6) Grid operators will be forced to initiate rolling blackouts to keep the system from burning down. If they don't, major components such as large transformers on the bulk transmission system will burn out. Blackouts will occur. Power in some areas could be out for months. Under normal conditions, a large transformer will typically take 8 to 16 months to get.
- 7) Unfortunately, what just happened to us and other parts of the country is a vivid and cold reminder of where we are today with our electric grid in most regions of the U.S.

What needs to be done going forward? For starters, the power pools are too big. They expose everyone to regional disturbances and accountability gets washed out with too many players in the pool. Why should we have to send our power down south when we need it here? We also need to have more "spinning reserves". Currently, 12% is what our power pool requires. It should be closer to 20% and should be coal-fired or nuclear, something always reliable. We should stop overflowing power pools with unreliable and costly wind and solar energy.

We currently don't have the political will to address the fallacies of the zero carbon and continued green energy push. We don't have the political will to get done what it will take to keep the lights on reliably as in days past. It will take more rolling blackouts and probably long-term permanent blackouts before the reality of our decades of failed energy policy are truly realized and effectively dealt with. We are just starting to see the economic costs calculated of what happened in Texas and the rest of the country from this event. We know the economic costs will be staggering, but also know they will be distorted and politicized too. Furthermore, we lest not forget the at least 39 unnecessary deaths caused by our failed energy policy.

Green energy did this to us. More green energy will do this to us more often.

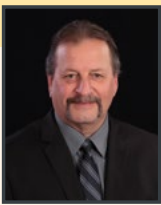


Meet Your Employees

Name	Tyler DeZeeuw
Hometown	Montevideo, MN
Family	Mom: Janelle; Dad: Jim; Brother: Adam
When did you start at Minnesota Valley?	March, 2020 as a Lineman
What do you like best about working here?	We do different tasks each day and you get to be outdoors
What do you like to do in your free time?	Ride snowmobile, side by side and going to the lake with family and friends
What did you want to be when you grew up?	A mechanic



ENGINEERING & OPERATIONS // BOB KRATZ



Manager of Operations

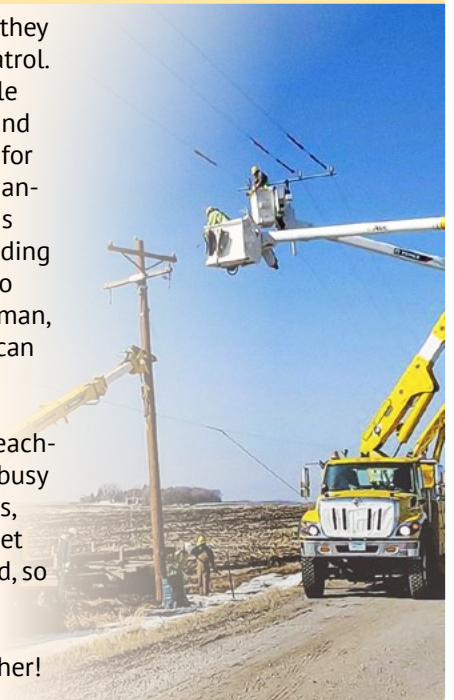
The crews finished up with a single phase to three phase line conversion east and south of the Echo Substation. This was another line upgrade to help out with the load in that area for now and the future. The next 2021 Work Plan project they just started is also a single phase to three phase conversion south of the Vallers Substation. The nice early spring weather in March has helped the crews continue on these jobs without much delay.

Besides patrolling line during this time of year, the linemen have been changing out Oil Circuit Reclosers, which are sent in to a maintenance and repair company to be gone through. This is done on a rotation of 5-7 years to keep them functioning properly when needed. Otherwise, the

crews have been replacing poles that they rejected when they were doing line patrol. N one fourteen zero four One such pole was one that some consumers north and east of Wood Lake were de-energized for about an hour and a half to get the changeout complete. Pictured to the right is lineman, Tommy Lee, in the bucket holding the energized three phase line away so the new pole can be set in place. Lineman, Blake Lymburner, in the other bucket, can be seen helping direct the pole.

We hope that before this newsletter reaches you, the underground plow will be busy installing cable for consumer upgrades, new services, etc. It is always nice to get some cable in before crops are planted, so we minimize crop damage.

Enjoy the much awaited warmer weather!



Comparative Report

	Jan-Feb 2021	Jan-Feb 2020	Jan-Feb 2001
Kwh Purchased	42,132,016	43,180,949	27,879,106
Kwh Sold	39,761,038	40,541,539	25,610,780
Cost Of Purchased Power	\$1,532,737	\$1,870,355	\$715,664
Patronage Capital Margins	\$628,807	\$222,035	\$133,499
Reserve For Taxes	\$44,167	\$44,167	\$38,840
Cost Per Kwh Purchased (mills)	36.38	43.31	27.19
	February '21	February '20	February '01
Total Plant	\$82,479,372	\$77,826,165	\$33,212,845
Number of Active Services	5,316	5,273	5,203
Avg. Residential Bill	\$266.96	\$244.98	\$131.92
Avg. Residential Kwh Consumption	2,861	2,629	2,047
Avg. Kwh Usage All Consumers	3,775	3,635	2,421
Peak Kw Demand (Peak Load)	42,483	41,816	26,829

Find Your Number!

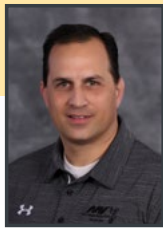
There are two account numbers hidden in this newsletter. If you find your number, call 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051 to receive a bill credit. The bill credit starts at \$10, but if neither number is claimed before the 25th of the month, the unclaimed amount rolls over to the next month! If both numbers are claimed, the recipients split the credit, then it starts again at \$10.



CLAIM BY THE 25TH OF APRIL TO RECEIVE:

\$20





MEMBER SERVICES // SCOTT KUBESH

Member Services Manager

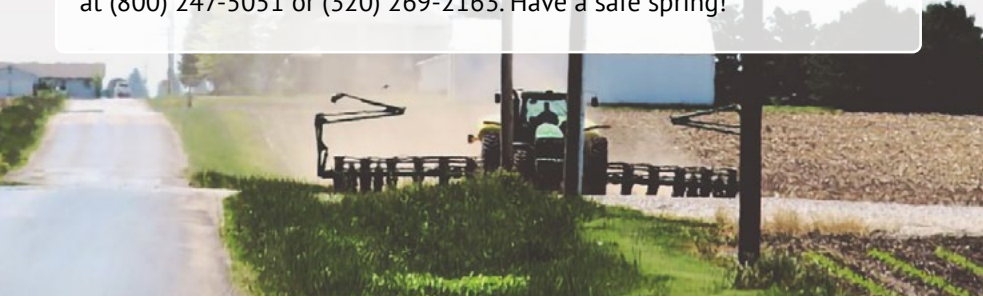
Have a Successful Planting Season Rooted in Safety

As days become warmer and farmers make plans to return to their fields for spring planting, Minnesota Valley Cooperative urges farm workers to be particularly alert to the dangers of working near overhead power lines.

- Always be aware of the location of power lines and designate pre-planned routes that avoid hazard areas.
- Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting tractors on trailer beds. Many tractors are equipped with radios and communications systems that have very tall antennas extending from the cab that could make contact with power lines. Avoid raising the arms of planters or cultivators or raising truck beds near power lines. Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path.
- Simply coming too close to a power line while working is dangerous as electricity can arc or “jump” to conducting material or objects, such as a ladder, pole or truck. Remember, non-metallic materials such as lumber, tree limbs, tires, ropes and hay will conduct electricity depending on dampness, dust and dirt contamination.
- When guy wires (a grounded wire used to stabilize utility poles) are broken, these normally neutral wires can be anything but harmless. G two zero two zero three If you hit a guy wire and break it, call the utility to fix it. Do not do it yourself. When dealing with electrical poles and wires, always call the electric utility.
- If your equipment does come into contact with power lines, stay in the cab and call for help. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until the electric utility arrives.
- If leaving the cab is necessary, as in the case of fire, the proper action is to jump—not step—with both feet hitting the ground at the same time. Hop to safety, keeping both feet together as you leave the area. Once you get away from the equipment, never attempt to get back on or even touch the equipment before the power has been shut off.
- Be aware of power lines in your own farm yard and the height of your lines when moving equipment or getting equipment ready for your spring planting.

Farmers should make sure full-time and seasonal workers are educated on these safety precautions. Danger areas need to be thoroughly identified and labeled.

We encourage you to let us know if you come across any damage to poles, cross arms, lines or any other electrical line hazards you see while performing your spring farming tasks. You can report your findings to us at (800) 247-5051 or (320) 269-2163. Have a safe spring!



2021 Scholarships

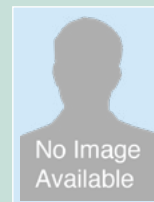
The selection committee for the Minnesota Valley/Basin Scholarship met on Thursday, February 18th and made selections for the scholarships. Members of the committee were: Harvey Williamson, Diane Dieter, Barb Holien and Don Fernholz. Since the committee felt there were many exceptionally strong candidates again this year, they elected to split the scholarship and award \$400 to five students. The students selected are *Elly Stratmoen*, *Kaitlynn Bott*, *Caleb Johnson*, *Kailey Hinz* and *Bailey Wolff*.



Elly Stratmoen will graduate from the Dawson-Boyd High School in 2021. Elly is the daughter of Jon and Stacy Stratmoen. Elly will be attending *NDSU*, studying Nursing.



Kaitlynn Bott will graduate from Lakeview this spring. Kaitlynn is the daughter of Chad and Stephanie Bott of Minneota. Kaitlynn will be attending either the *University of South Dakota* or *South Dakota State University*, studying Nursing.



Caleb Johnson is the son of Ed and Kathy Johnson of Boyd. Caleb is home schooled and will graduate this spring. Caleb will be attending *Minnesota West Community and Technical College* in *Canby*, pursuing his degree to become an electrician.



Kailey Hinz is the daughter of Benjamin and Jennifer Hinz of Wood Lake. Kailey will graduate this spring and will be attending *MSU in Moorhead*, studying Speech Language and Hearing Science.



Bailey Wolff is the daughter of Jonathan and Stacy Wolff. Bailey will graduate this spring and will be attending *Lake Area Technical College* in *Watertown, SD*, studying Livestock Production and Management (Agriculture).

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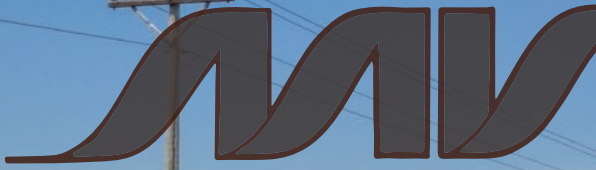
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501 South 1st Street
P.O. Box 248
Montevideo, MN 56265

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MANAGER'S MESSAGE // PAT CARRUTH



General Manager

2022 Work Plan and Budget to Board This Month

This next year, we will again be working on the projects in our \$22,667,082 Four Year Construction Work Plan. The 2022 plan calls for \$4.5 million in construction and system improvements. In

addition to the construction projects, we will continue to work hard on our maintenance projects such as pole testing and treating and continue to work to catch up on our right-of-way clearing. We have had three right-of-way crews from our Minnesota Valley Tree Service working full time on our system this past year and expect that to continue next year. They will continue working in the southwest quadrant of the system next year.

We will have a draft plan to the board for them to review by mid-month and present the final Work Plan and Budget to them at their regular board meeting this month. As you know, we increased rates on January 1st of this year. We hope this increase will hold us for a couple of years. Everyone working here understands that we work for you, the member-owners. We understand that it is your money we are spending on your electric power cooperative from mine-mouth to the meter in your yard. We work hard to be good and effective stewards of both your money and your power grid. You, of course, elect your board to provide oversight and make sure that we are being good stewards.

Prepare for Winter

Get your heating system tuned up whether gas, oil or electric. Give us a call to get on the schedule. A properly tuned heating system can not only save you money, it

will also give you a better chance of making it through the winter without a problem. We are also seeing some supply chain issues with getting parts and new equipment in the heating and cooling area. We are trying to order in enough parts and supplies to make sure we can take care of the needs of our members this winter.

If you have a generator, it might be a good time to fire it up and make sure it's ready to go. If you don't have one, you might want to think about putting one in—especially now that we are part of the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) that brought us rolling blackouts for the first time in our history last February 16th. We joined the SPP in 2016. They have been holding stakeholders' meetings since that "event" last winter to try and better prepare for the next time we run short of generating capacity. I sat in on the third such meeting last month.

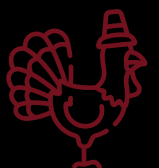
Personally, I have no confidence in SPP's ability to keep our lights on during the next extreme weather event in our part of the country. The SPP footprint is too large and over reliant on green energy. In addition to power supply issues, we have had a number of ice storms over the years. One of the worst ice storms for Minnesota Valley occurred in early 1977. The last member had power restored 11 days after the first outage. It can happen, so please, be prepared. Talk to our Member Services Department if you have any standby generator questions or would like more information on having one put in.

Have a blessed Thanksgiving!

Minnesota Valley Cooperative will be closed Thursday, November 11th in observance of Veterans Day. Thank you to all Veterans for your service.



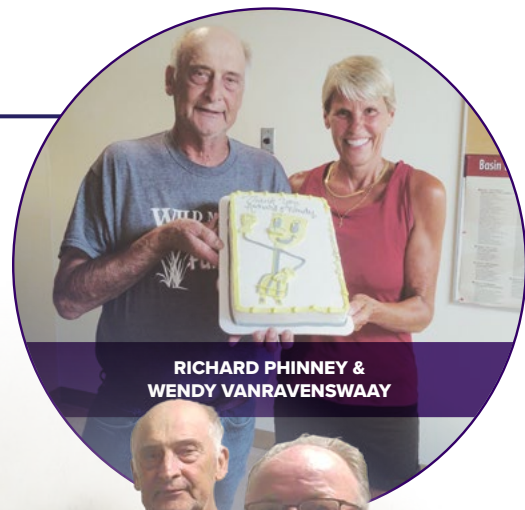
We will also be closed Thursday, November 25th for the Thanksgiving holiday.



Operation Round Up Board

Richard Phinney and Wendy VanRavenswaay are resigning from the Operation Round Up Board at the end of the year. Richard has served on the Operation Round Up Board for 19 years and Wendy has served for 12 years. Thank you, Richard and Wendy, for your dedication on the Operation Round Up Board.

The Operation Round Up Board (Left to Right): Janet Bossuyt, Norm Viken, Wendy VanRavenswaay, Kelly Aalfs, Vonnie Severson, Richard Phinney and Jon Kleven.



RICHARD PHINNEY & WENDY VANRAVENSWAAY



Colorless, Odorless... and Deadly

430

At least 430 people die each year in the U.S. as a result of carbon monoxide poisoning. Thousands more end up in hospital emergency rooms.

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas that kills without warning.

It claims the lives of hundreds of people every year and makes thousands more ill. Many household items including gas and oil burning furnaces, portable generators and charcoal grills produce this poison gas. Following these important steps can keep your family safe.

KNOW THE DANGERS OF CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

CO DETECTORS

- Install battery-operated or battery back-up CO detectors near every sleeping area in your home.
- Check CO detectors regularly to be sure they are functioning properly.

OIL & GAS FURNACES

- Have your furnace inspected every year.

PORTABLE GENERATORS

- Never use a generator inside your home or garage, even if doors and windows are open.
- Only use generators outside—more than 20 feet away from your home, doors and windows.



2022 Caucus Meetings

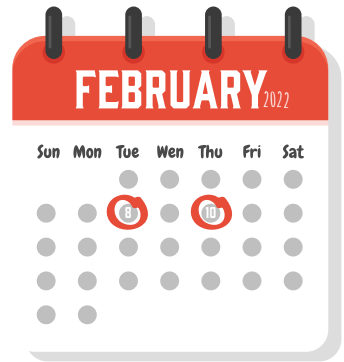
Tuesday, February 8th, 2022

District 2: Gary Groothuis
- 10:30 AM at REC Headquarters

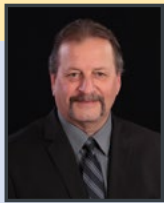
District 4: Steve Norman
- 1:30 PM at REC Headquarters

Thursday, February 10th, 2022

District 6: Tim Velde
- 10 AM at Wood Lake
Community Center



ENGINEERING & OPERATIONS // BOB KRATZ



Manager of Operations

It looks like we are still going to try to get a few projects done before the ground freezes. Minnesota Valley crews will be trying to get as many of the underground services in as possible, otherwise some will have to hold off until next spring. Besides getting last minute service upgrades and larger transformers for added load, the line crews are also doing pole changeouts.

When inclement weather does arrive, they will be doing the annual line patrol in the Lisbon, Riverside, Gluek, Asbury and Chapman Substation areas. These are done on a 3-year rotation for each substation. You may see a Minnesota Valley truck in your yard this winter season or going slow along a road while checking, so

don't be alarmed and think there is a problem. We are just doing our annual inspections.

One of the things that the crews find when doing these inspections are burned poles from someone burning the road ditches. Please be careful when burning the ditches to avoid this costly problem.

The crews also look for things that could cause a problem later on if not repaired. O three zero nine zero one These would cause an inconvenience for you later with a possible outage or blinking lights.

If you have a planned project or are considering a change next year to your electrical facilities, this winter is a great time to discuss them with us.

Comparative Report

	Jan-Sept 2021	Jan-Sept 2020	Jan-Sept 2001
Kwh Purchased	149,895,322	149,609,810	103,957,100
Kwh Sold	140,263,792	140,195,983	95,972,018
Cost Of Purchased Power	\$7,217,598	\$7,068,764	\$2,558,461
Patronage Capital Margins	\$1,514,473	\$803,888	\$260,682
Reserve For Taxes	\$198,750	\$223,289	\$193,872
Cost Per Kwh Purchased (mills)	48.15	47.25	24.61
	September '21	September '20	September '01
Total Plant	\$83,566,129	\$79,909,671	\$33,663,071
Number of Active Services	5,334	5,303	5,223
Avg. Residential Bill	\$194.60	\$177.75	\$94.09
Avg. Residential Kwh Consumption	1,407	1,339	1,192
Avg. Kwh Usage All Consumers	2,452	2,341	1,579
Peak Kw Demand (Peak Load)	27,637	25,202	21,471

No one claimed their account number last month, so we've rolled the amount over into this month!

FIND YOUR NUMBER AND CLAIM BY THE 25TH OF NOVEMBER TO RECEIVE:

\$20

Find Your Location Number for a Bill Credit!

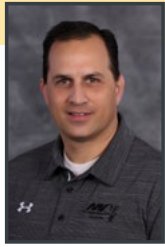
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If both numbers are claimed, the recipients split the credit, then it starts again at \$10.



MEMBER SERVICES // SCOTT KUBESH



Member Services Manager

Electric Heating is Still the Way to Go

As in the past, Minnesota Valley has set its heating rates to ensure the best electric heating prices for those members who have electric heat systems. Minnesota

Valley Cooperative will tell you right up front what your electric heat rate for the whole winter is going to be so that your heat bills, with any type of electric heat, will be cheaper than those of any fossil fuel heating systems.

You won't have to play any guessing games with heating fuel prices if you are heating with Minnesota Valley's *Electric Heat* or *Dual Fuel Heat Rates*. Our rates are comparable

to #2 fuel oil (60% efficient) and L.P. (90% efficient) heating systems if the price of those two heating fuels was roughly \$1.15 – \$1.20 per gallon. A recent check with local fuel suppliers found those numbers to be considerably higher.

Yes, electric heat is the way to go for a *CLEAN, SAFE* and *CHEAP* heating energy source. Contact your local HVAC contractor, electrical contractor or the Minnesota Valley Member Services Department to get in on the savings. There are many types of electric heat to meet all of your heating demands.

Geothermal Heat Pumps: The most efficient heating system around. This type of system uses the earth to heat your home at a fraction of the cost of other systems. These amazing heating systems can reach efficiencies of 400% and more!

Air Source Heat Pumps: Use the heat transfer ability of refrigeration equipment to transfer heat into or from your house at very economical rates. Efficiencies of well over 200% can be attained.

Electric Plenum Heaters: A plenum heater is a forced-air heating device that is installed in the plenum—the spot in the ductwork system where ducting and furnace join. It uses the existing ductwork and furnace blower to distribute heat to the building.

Radiant Slab Heating: A very popular way to heat a structure and get the added feature of warm floors. Radiant heat waves travel through the air and heat objects that they hit. Just the same way that the sun heats objects when it hits them.

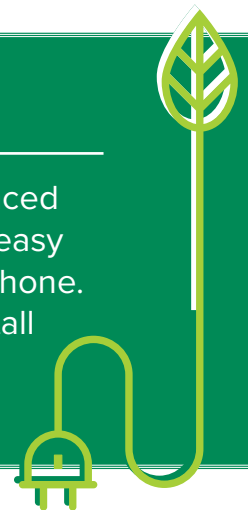
Radiant Wall and Ceiling Heat: Heat the objects (like you) in your home, not the air. Four thirty two zero six one Radiant ceiling, cove and baseboard heaters give you that kind of instant heat.

Fan-forced Supplemental Heat Units: There's nothing new about fan-forced electric heat. It's been around for more than a century, making bathrooms, dens, basements, breezeways or little-used rooms more comfortable at an instant's notice.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

According to **energy.gov**, furnace filters should be cleaned or replaced once a month (or as recommended with some specialty filters). An easy way to remember to switch out filters is to set a reminder on your phone. It's also a smart idea to write the date on each new filter as you install it, so you can check its condition at a glance.

Source: energy.gov



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Power Association

Website

www.mnvalleyrec.com

Address

501 South 1st Street
P.O. Box 248
Montevideo, MN 56265





COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Crazy about Curling

Win or lose, there's
no bad curling
Pages 8-9

Saddle making
for the pros
Pages 12-13

Many curling enthusiasts
contend the world would
be a more peaceful place if
everyone "threw the stone."

OAHE MEMBERS AND LOCALLY SITED GENERATION



Jordan Lamb
jlamb@
oaheelectric.com

Many of our members have received inquiries about potential siting of generation on their property. While renewable energy is affordable to install and generate power for our members, there are both pros and cons that must be accounted for and it is important that our members fully understand both sides of this conundrum.

When a renewable project is sited in Oahe Territory, there are several benefits that Oahe Members and local communities receive. A recent wind installation provided both short term jobs in concrete, electrical and road infrastructure. Long term jobs for the area were also provided in plant maintenance and long term generator plant managers to ensure safe and efficient delivery of the renewable energy. These dollars stay in local communities and tend to support local businesses.

Generator installations also are required to pay several forms of taxes to both local and state agencies related to construction fees in permitting, property tax and generation tax to name a few. If the project attained a lease agreement with a local farmer or land owner, those dollars are also kept locally.

In the intermediate ground lies transmission congestion. When a new project is sited, it often cannot attain firm transmission service. This means that anytime transmission lines are at full capacity, it can affect the price of the generation output. Some times this price may be very cheap, even negative, which means that the generator owner pays the off-taker to take the electricity. Other times this may drive up the price, similar to what we saw last February, to over \$1-2 per kWh (our residential rate is 9 cents/kWh today). Depending on where the congestion occurs, it could benefit or hurt Oahe Members

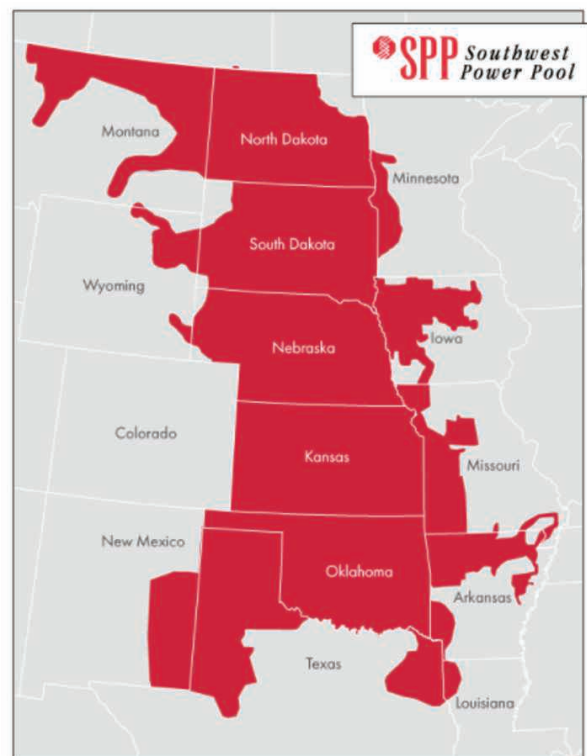
On the other side of this fence lies some obvious and not so obvious implications. Many local members do not like the appearance of renewable projects, the most often mentioned being wind. Generator installations can have long term negative impacts on property valuation due to this. There is also concern for long term cleanup requirements. Typical renewable projects have in contract to clean up after the end of life, but there is concern if an entity went bankrupt prior to the facility end of life that there would be no clean up efforts to return ground to its prior condition.

The more complex issue is related to transmission required to outlet new generation. As part of Southwest Power Pool (SPP), load customers, in our case Oahe Members, pay for transmission within a given zone. If a transmission line goes through our zone or service area, our members pay for a por-

tion of that line. SPP encompasses the Midwest (see graphic below).

Recently, there has been a push from Washington, D.C., to site renewable wind in the wind rich Midwest and build transmission to supply this generation to the generation short areas along the East and West coastlines. The D.C. argument here is that these generators sited in the Midwest are similar to what I noted earlier above. The issue here is that the local area load pays for the generation. Generation we currently do not have enough load for. Essentially, we are paying for transmission outlets to serve coastal areas, areas short on generation, and coastal areas should be paying for this transmission, not Oahe Members. Current SPP tariff and common Regional Transmission Organization tariffs require local load to pay for new generation generally in the entire United States.

While renewables can bring affordable priced power that puts downward pressure on Oahe rates, we must be cautious to identify issues and determine upfront where the construction costs ultimately are pinned. Oahe, East River and Basin Electric Cooperatives have voiced our concerns and continue to evaluate options moving forward with our members as our #1 priority.



**COOPERATIVE
CONNECTIONS**

OAHE ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 019-042)

Board of Directors:

James Feller – Vice President
605.962.6207
Brandon Haag – Assistant Secretary
605.215.6758
Ryan Noyes – Treasurer
605.280.3500
Ross Sperry – Secretary
605.280.7770
Kirk Yackley – President
605.258.2412

Employees:

Tyler Arbach – Journeyman Lineman
Mark Bruning – Line Foreman
Matt Eldridge – Operations Manager
Trudie Feldman – Custodian
Brady Gaer – Journeyman Lineman
Sidney Geigle – Journeyman Lineman
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Tory Smith – Journeyman Lineman

OAHE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is published monthly by Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 216, 102 S. Canford, Blunt, SD 57522, for its members. Families subscribe to Oahe Electric Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. Oahe Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to Oahe Electric Cooperative members on matters pertaining to rural electrification and better rural living. Subscription information: Electric cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Blunt, SD 57522 and at additional mailing offices.

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Our Mission

Oahe Electric delivers high quality, low-cost electric service to our local member-owners. As a Touchstone Energy® Cooperative, we are committed to meeting the highest standards of customer satisfaction. We do business with accountability, integrity, innovation and commitment to community. As an electric co-op, we are part of America's most trusted network of high quality energy providers.

Oahe Electric Now Accepting Lineman's Scholarship Applications

Oahe Electric Cooperative is offering a **\$1,000** scholarship for a full-time student registered or planning to register in a power line construction and maintenance program.

The purpose of this scholarship is to emphasize and support the education of future power line workers in South Dakota. Oahe Electric has committed to providing funds for financial assistance to students

enrolled in power line maintenance programs with the hopes that graduates of that program will pursue a career with rural electric cooperatives in the area.

Applicants for the scholarship must be a member or a member dependent of Oahe Electric OR a student from the Hughes or Sully County areas. Applications for the 2022-2023 academic year are being accepted until **Feb. 11, 2022**.

Oahe Electric Now Accepting Applications for 2022 Scholarships

Oahe Electric, in conjunction with Basin Electric Power Cooperative, is offering **one \$2,000** college scholarship to a lucky dependent of an Oahe Electric member(s). In addition to this scholarship, Oahe Electric is offering **four \$1,000** college scholarships. The scholarship program recognizes and encourages the academic achievements of students in our region. It also serves as an investment in the economic future of rural areas.

Applicants for the scholarships must be a U.S. citizen and a dependent of Oahe Electric members.

Applicants also must be students enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school.

The scholarship recipients are chosen based on a combination of their written essay, SAT/ACT scores, overall grade-point average, work experience, participation in school and community activities, a personal statement of career goals and a written recommendation by a third party. Applicants for the 2022-2023 academic year are being accepted until **Feb. 11, 2022**.

For more information regarding these scholarships, contact Samantha at Oahe Electric in Blunt at 1-800-640-6243 or oahe@oaheelectric.com. Applications can also be downloaded by visiting our website at www.oaheelectric.com.

MEMBER THANK YOU

Oahe Electric,

Thank you for selecting me for the \$500 scholarship. It will go to use towards my tuition.

Sincerely,
Regan Bollweg

Make a plan before heading out in wintry road conditions

Though they may make for a pretty seasonal backdrop, snow and ice can complicate even modest travel plans. It's unsafe to drive when visibility is vastly reduced or when you can't fully control your car. According to AAA, wintry weather and its byproduct - hazardous road conditions - are a factor in nearly a half-million crashes and more than 2,000 road deaths each year. With those figures in mind, here are some tips to minimize the risk to yourself and other motorists during winter weather.

Don't drive unless you must. It really isn't worth the risk to your safety and that of others to venture out onto potentially unsafe roads for any circumstance that isn't urgent. Pay attention to weather reports so you can run any time-sensitive errands and stock up on supplies before adverse conditions arrive. If you must drive to work, that's one thing. But don't tempt fate if you can help it.

If you have to drive, eliminate distractions. Keep your phone out of reach or set it to airplane mode - a good practice year-round but especially important when roads are dicey.

Keep a bundle of cold-weather gear in your car, including water, nonperishable food, warm clothing, a flashlight, glass scraper, blankets and medications.

Before you set out, alert others to your route, destination and estimated time of arrival.

Make sure your tires are properly inflated and have plenty of tread.

Keep your gas tank at least half full to prevent a frozen fuel line, which could leave you stranded.

Don't use cruise control when driving on any slippery surface.

Drive slowly. Lower your speed to counteract the reduced traction that accompanies snow and ice. Accelerate and decelerate slowly. Applying the gas slowly can help avoid skids. Since it takes longer to slow down on icy roads, take your time to slow down for a stop sign or light.

A final note for winter driving: Never warm up a vehicle in an enclosed area such as a garage. Exercise caution and good judgment to stay safe as you negotiate whatever conditions winter brings this year.

POWERLINE SAFETY QUIZ

TRUE OR FALSE?

Power lines are insulated for contact.

False. While power lines may have a covering to protect against weather, they are not insulated for contact. Birds can sit on power lines unhurt because they don't create a path to the ground. You and your ladder do.

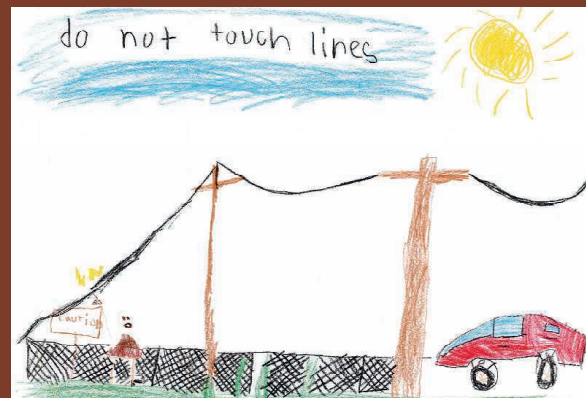


I should keep myself and any equipment I'm using at least 10 feet away from any power lines.

True. You don't need to contact a power line to be in danger; electricity can jump, or arc, from a power line to a person who gets too close. The best insulator is space. Keep yourself and your equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines.

I can be electrocuted by a power line even if I am wearing gloves and rubber boots.

True. Work gloves and rubber boots offer no protection against contact with a power line. Once again, space - and lots of it - is the best insulator.



Don't touch power lines

Luke Walden

Luke Walden reminds co-op members that it's important to never touch power lines under any conditions. Luke is from Brandon, where he and his parents Blake and Jennifer are all members of Sioux Valley Energy.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents. Colored drawings are encouraged.



BRUNCH TIME!

CHEESY SAUSAGE AND POTATO SKILLET CASSEROLE

Ingredients:
 8 ounces bulk breakfast sausage, crumbled
 1 medium onion, chopped
 1 medium green bell pepper, chopped
 6 eggs
 1 cup milk
 1 tablespoon McCormick® Oregano Leaves
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon McCormick® Coarse Ground Black Pepper
 1 1/2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
 2 plum tomatoes, seeded and chopped
 1 tablespoon oil
 1 package (20 oz) refrigerated shredded hash browns
 3 tbsp fresh dill, parsley or green onion finely chopped

METHOD

Cook and stir sausage in large skillet on medium heat 5 minutes or until lightly browned. Add onion and bell pepper; cook and stir 5 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Set aside. Beat eggs in large bowl with wire whisk. Add milk, oregano, salt and pepper; mix well. Add sausage mixture, cheeses and tomatoes; mix well. Set aside. Pour oil into same skillet, swirling to coat the pan. Spread hash browns in bottom and up sides of pan. Pour egg mixture over potatoes. Cover. Cook on medium heat 10 to 15 minutes or until eggs are set.

mccormick.com

Please send your favorite seafood recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2022. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

BRUNCH EGG BAKE

Ingredients:
 12 slices, bread, crusts removed
 2 cups diced ham or bacon, crisp and chopped
 1 - 4 oz. can mushrooms, drained
 1 green pepper, chopped
 1 onion, chopped
 1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
 5 eggs
 2-1/2 cups milk
 salt and pepper
 paprika

METHOD

Butter six slices of bread and put face down in 9 x 13 inch pan, lightly sprayed with cooking spray. Cover the bread with the ham, mushrooms, green pepper, onion and cheese. Dice the remaining bread and spread over the top. Beat eggs, milk, salt and pepper and pour over the top. Sprinkle with paprika. Cover the pan with foil and refrigerate overnight. In the morning, bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour. Serves 12.

Mary Jessen, Holabird

COLD OATMEAL MUESLI

Ingredients:
 1 cup quick oats
 1 cup old fashioned oats
 1/2 cup raisins
 1/3 cup brown sugar
 1 tsp cinnamon
 2 cup milk

METHOD

Mix all ingredients together and let sit overnight in the refrigerator. Serve cold. May add walnuts and apples or other fresh berries when serving, if desired.

Elaine Rieck, Harrisburg



Valerie Marso

vmarso@
oaheelectric.com

'Tis the season of cold weather, higher electric bills and empty houses. A couple of popular questions we get may seem very different but actually have similar answers:

1. Why is my bill so high?

2. What was the average for the people who lived here prior to us?

The simple answer? Personal living habits can have a huge impact on what your bill is. Now don't get me wrong, the temperature also plays a part in that if you have electric heat and actually even if you don't! When it is cold out, the difference between the temperature outside, and what you want the temperature to be inside is greater than what it is in the summertime. For example, even if it is 110 outside in July and you want it to be 65 in your house the difference your cooling system has to make up is only 45 degrees. In the wintertime, if it is -5 out and you want it to be 65 inside, the difference your heating system has to make up for is 70 degrees! This is also the explanation when people go south for a couple of months (or even a couple of weeks) and leave their thermostat on 55. If

it is cold here (which is generally why people go south for a while) there is a big temperature void to fill. Just because no one is there doesn't mean there won't be an electric bill. Also, in the wintertime people may be running tank heaters, plugging in vehicles among other variables that come along with the cold.

The easiest way to track what you use and how your living habits effect your electric bill is with SmartHub! You can see your daily usage and think about what changed to make your usage go up or down (ie - weather, running a dish washer or clothes dryer, plugging in a space heater, etc). Then it won't be a surprise when you open your bill either.

Some things you can't control (weather) but some things you definitely can. You choose how long and how often you shower, what your water heater thermostat is set to, what your heating/cooling thermostat is set to (did you get a programmable thermostat for Christmas?) How efficient are your appliances? Do you only run the dishwasher or washing machine with full loads? Do you turn off lights when you leave a room or your garage? Can you make your supper in a crockpot versus the oven?

All of these choices have an impact on your electric bill. For most people, the majority of your bill stems directly from usage/kWh. There is a portion that will always be there even if there is no usage which is referred to as a

facility charge. What is that, you ask? There is a cost to operate and maintain our electric system. Whether you use a lot or a little, the cost of getting power to your location remains the same and that is why there are two separate components - kWh charge to cover the amount of electricity consumed and a facility charge to cover basic costs of getting electric service to you. As is the case with everything, the cost of getting service to new consumers continues to increase and we do keep a close watch on these costs and do adjust our facility charge from time to time.

There are also other things that may impact your bill that are less apparent. Open south facing curtains and let that sunshine in! Seal up drafty windows and other leaks (gaps around chimneys, doors, recessed lights in insulated ceilings, etc).

So all the above factors answer question 1. What about question 2? As you have now learned, personal habits have a significant impact on your bill. Which is also why there is no such thing as average! You can take two of the same exact houses, put the same number of people in them, and end up with two completely different bills! Why? Personal living habits.

Please call us at 1.800.640.6243 if you have any questions regarding your electric bill, we are always happy to help you!

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

This month's question is:

"How many board of trustee positions are open this year for the Operation Round Up® Board?"

Please submit your answer via email to oahe@oaheelectric.com with the subject line of "Question of the Month." A surprise gift will be sent to the winner!

WINNER OF QUESTION OF THE MONTH

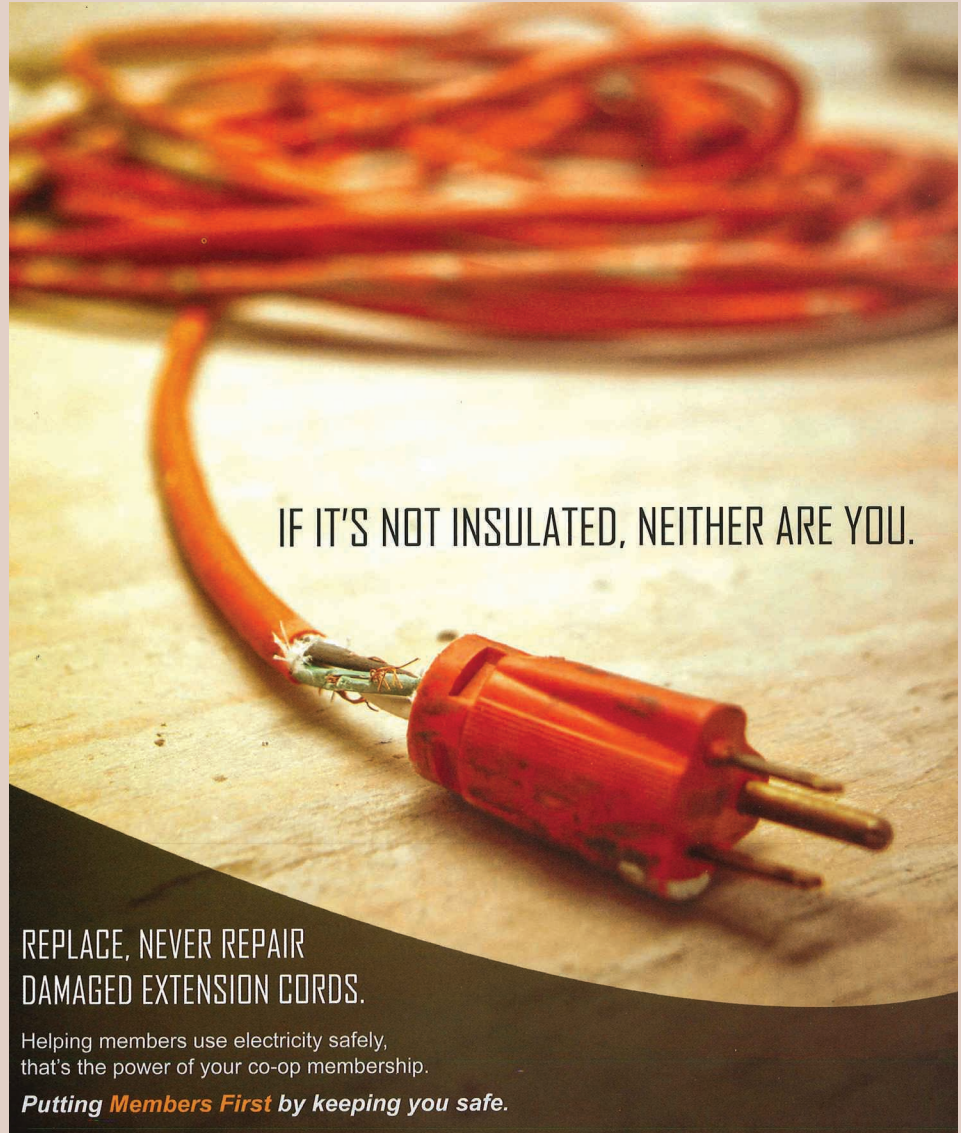
The Question of the Month winners for the December 2021 publication were Thomas and Irma LeFaive.

Congratulations and we hope you enjoyed your prizes!

LIKE US!

You can now keep in touch with your cooperative on Facebook! We will share with you the latest news, events, power outage updates, energy efficiency tips, money-saving rebates, load management information, legislative alerts, safety tips and much more!

We hope you "like" Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. on Facebook!



IF IT'S NOT INSULATED, NEITHER ARE YOU.

REPLACE, NEVER REPAIR
DAMAGED EXTENSION CORDS.

Helping members use electricity safely,
that's the power of your co-op membership.

Putting Members First by keeping you safe.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Person with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202)720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800)877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: 1.) mail - U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; 2.) fax: (202) 690-7442; or 3.) email: program.intake@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.



STICKS AND STONES

Members of the Aberdeen Curling Club hold a public instructional session to teach both the young and old the finer points of their sport.

Curling clubs seek to educate the public and spread the word about the joy of throwing stones

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Looking for a sure-fire way to achieve permanent world peace and lasting harmony?

Make curling mandatory.

At least Bryan Rau thinks that's just the ticket to putting an end to international animosity. Rau serves on the board of the Aberdeen Curling Club and describes being hooked the moment he threw his first stone in competition eight years ago.

"When I touched that first stone it was like 10,000 volts going through me. I kicked out the hack and threw that stone down the ice and it was just incredible," he said. "I think if everybody curled, the whole world would be different. Everybody would get along. There's no bad curling. No matter where you play, whether you win or lose, it's all good curling. It's a game that's played with honor and pride. You don't have to be a jock or a talented athlete. It's a sport that's

made for everyone. I've seen people play from 8 to 85."

Bryan and his fellow board member, Steve Gascoigne, spent a recent afternoon in Gascoigne's garage taking in a documentary called "Sticks and Stones: Battle for the Soul of Curling." When they're not playing the game, they enjoy talking about it.

As for his role as the club's ice master, Gascoigne can wax eloquently about how to prepare the perfect sheet of competition ice. He describes the tedious and exacting process that involves various measures of zammung, scraping, mopping, pebbling (twice), watering and nipping.

And if you can't control your stone after Gascoigne and his crew have spent 45 minutes working their magic, more practice may be in order.

The job of a stone hitting its target largely falls on the shoulders of the skip. A typical four-member team includes the lead, second, vice skip and skip. Each player throws two 44-pound stones and the vice skip



Aberdeen Curling Club members Danny Wolfgram, John Hilton, Alex Wolfgram and John Peterson recently completed an "eight ender," which is often compared to a perfect game in baseball.

Curling club contacts

Sioux Falls Curling Club
605-271-7539
www.scheelsiceplex.com

Aberdeen Curling Club
605-228-1717
www.curlaberdeen.com

Rushmore Curling Club
605-484-4477
www.rushmorecurling.org

Yankton Curling Club
(605) 665-0229
www.yanktonice.org

MN Curling Association
www.mncurling.org



Many curling clubs have two common goals: dedicated ice and a desire to teach others the rules and techniques of their sport.

stands in when it's the skip's turn to throw. The direction of the stone's path can be altered by sweepers who brush the surface in a way that can make the stone lose speed, gain speed or curl left or right.

The last stone is called the hammer and can be used to earn points with a favorable position near "the button" or knock the opponent's stone out of the target area.

But beyond the technical aspects of the sport or tallying wins or losses, each of the four most active clubs across the state share the same goal of educating the public about the sport and getting younger folks hooked on curling.

Rau, for instance, is a long-time Scout master and is working with his local troop to get the kids involved. He and Gascoigne and other members of the club visit the Boys and Girls club, school groups and others to

teach youngsters how to play the sport, share their positive experiences and answer their questions.

The same spirit of advocacy is also found at the Yankton Curling Club, which was started last winter by Mike and Julianna Ford along with a small group of other enthusiasts.

Julianna serves as president of the group and fell in love with the sport when she was a high school student in her native Alberta. She describes failing to make the roster of the volleyball and basketball teams but eventually finding a home with the curling squad.

"Our gym class went to the local ice rink and I loved it," she recalled. "It was a lot more strategic than physical and it was something I could compete in."

She later moved to Sioux Falls, married Mike, and the two helped create the existing club in that city.

Several years later they moved to Yankton for Mike's work and soon started another club. The Yankton group lists about 45 members and is also heavily involved in growing the sport in their community.

"We're reaching out to schools, clubs and nursing homes," Julianna said. "There are handicapped leagues and elderly people can play by using a stick to throw the stone. It's a sport that's literally for everyone."

The Fords don't often find themselves on different sides of the ice, but when they do they try to keep the competitive fires closer to an ember than a raging flame.

So, bottom line...who's better?

"No comment," Julianna said, before commenting with a chuckle, "but I'm the one who went to Arena Nationals."

Stay in the Know!



Matt Eldridge
meldridge@
oaheelectric.com

At Oahe Electric, we are constantly striving to improve our operational efficiency so we can provide the most reliable electric service possible for our consumer-members (that's you!).

We rely on data for nearly every aspect of our operations, which is why we need your help. By making sure we have your most accurate and complete contact information, we can continue to provide the high level of service that you expect and deserve. Accurate information enables us to

improve customer service and enhance communications for reporting and repairing outages. It also allows co-op members to receive information about other important programs, events and activities.

Up-to-date contact information can potentially speed up the power restoration process during an outage. For example, if we are experiencing a widespread outage, we can call members in certain areas to see whether or not they have power, helping us to narrow down our search for whatever is causing the outage, in turn reducing the overall outage time.

While we always do our best to maintain service, we

occasionally plan outages to update, repair or replace equipment. In these instances, we can provide advance notification to affected members through a phone call or email, if we have your updated contact information.

Keeping the co-op updated with your information also helps us when there's a question about energy use or billing. Emails are also used to notify registered members of co-op event details. In addition, discrepancies on your account can be taken care of promptly if Oahe Electric has accurate account information.

Many of you have been members of the co-op for years, and it's likely that your account information hasn't been updated for some time. We recognize that many members now use a cell phone as their primary phone service, and we might not have that number in our system.

I want to emphasize that in providing your contact information to the co-op, we will never share this information with any third parties. It is only used by Oahe Electric to send important information to you. Please take a moment to confirm or update your contact information by calling us at 1-800-640-6243 or emailing us at oahe@oaheelectric.com. By doing so, you will be helping us improve service and efficiency so we can better serve you and all members of the co-op.

SMALL CHANGE CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

What is Operation Round Up? Operation Round Up® is just what the name implies: each month, Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. simply "rounds up" the electric bills of voluntarily participating members to the next highest dollar. For example, a member's monthly bill of \$132.68 would automatically be rounded up to \$133, with the additional 32 cents going to the Operation Round Up Fund.

How do I participate? Oahe Electric's Operation Round Up® program is an opt-out program – meaning that you are automatically enrolled, with nothing else needing done to participate! If you have not interested in donating, you can call the office at 1-800-640-6243 and request to be removed from the program.

How much will it cost members? The most a member can contribute is 99 cents per month x 12 months = \$11.88/year – this doesn't sound like much, but with this small change, thousands of dollars can be generated and will mean a big difference to the people and organi-

zations in our area.

Where will the money go? All Operation Round Up® donations are placed in a trust and are administered by an independent Board of Trustees. The board is made up of community leaders who serve on a voluntary basis. The board evaluates all requests for funds, determines who will receive funding and how all Operation Round Up® funds will be distributed.

Who is eligible for funds? The funds are used to address charitable community needs, whether it is disaster relief for an individual, or an organization funding a special project. Since the program's first disbursement in 2009, the program has distributed over \$108,000. The region served by the fund is primarily the electrical area served by Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc., including Hughes and Sully counties.

How do I apply for funds? The easy-to-complete applications for funding are currently available and can be requested by phone at 605-962-6243. Applica-

tions can also be found on our website at www.oaheelectric.com. All applications are due by **April 30, 2022**. Completed applications may be mailed to: Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 216, Blunt, SD 57522, faxed to: 605-962-6306, or emailed to: oahe@oaheelectric.com. After the deadline, the Board of Trustees will meet and allocate the funds to those they feel are in the most need.

How do I get involved? There are currently two, five-year Board of Trustees position openings. Trustees normally have to commit one afternoon a year to review fund request applications in person, with the possibility of correspondence regarding emergency fund requests throughout the year. If you are interested in offering your time to this endeavor, please contact Samantha Irvine, Operation Round Up Coordinator, at 1.800.640.6243 or oahe@oaheelectric.com.

Together, by giving a few cents each month, Oahe Electric members can make a big impact on life in our area!



Before You Buy: Electric "Tankless" Water Heaters



Russ Hohn
rhohn@
oaheelectric.com

Conversations with Oahe Electric members this past month have caused me to draft this article. Like all articles on the internet; it must be true? Unfortunately, not so. Tankless water heaters, both gas and electric, have been around for a few years. However, the true facts on installation costs and operating costs are never mentioned. Whether the unit is purchased online or from a large retail store, these important questions are never discussed. Their selling point is "don't heat water unless you need it!"

The following information is relevant to standard electric water heaters in comparison to electric tankless water heaters. A household of four will normally have an electric water heater that is around fifty gallons. This unit has two heating elements, one on the upper part of the tank and one on the lower part of the tank. These heating elements are rated in watts, and each is normally 3,800 watts or four thousand watts. Standard operation for a standard electric water heater is that only one element "heats" at a time. Pay attention to the size of heating elements I just mentioned! These heating elements will shut off /on as needed to provide you with your hot water needs. A household with more people will normally have an electric water heater around eighty gallons. This unit will have two heating elements and will operate in the same manner. Only one element will heat at a time, again switching between upper and lower as needed. The most energy you can use at any given time is the wattage rating of your electric heating elements per hour. 4000-watt element is equal to 4 kWhs per hour x .09 cents per kWh = .36 cents per hour to operate and normally operate for 3 hours per day = \$1.08 x

30 days = \$32.40 for the month.

Let us look at the electric tankless water heater. A tankless unit that would replace a standard 50-gallon electric water heater will have a 27,000-watt heating element! A tankless unit that would replace a standard 80-gallon electric water heater will have a 31,000-watt heating element! I have personally seen these units cost \$2.60 per day. They use a tremendous amount of electricity when they work.

Now let us educate ourselves on the installation cost because no one mentioned this! In a standard house, you will have one electric breaker panel rated at two hundred amps. Many times, this panel is not large enough to handle the electric tankless unit, so you will have to install another 150- or 200-amp breaker panel just for the tankless unit. Also, when you install another breaker panel of this size, you will also have to install another secondary wire circuit from the electric meter to your home to energize the new breaker panel. Some electric companies have a different electric rate for people with tankless water heaters, costing them even more. This gets expensive, people!

Anyone, that calls me and asks questions regarding the tankless unit receives this for an answer, **DO NOT PURCHASE AN ELECTRIC TANKLESS WATER HEATER**. If your mind is set on a tankless water heater, please purchase a propane or natural gas unit! I know it sounds odd for me to promote something other than electric equipment. If it is not good for Oahe Electric and its membership, I will not support it.

Feel free to call or email rhohn@oaheelectric.com or 605-280-3375.

I wish everyone a Happy New Year and thank you for your patronage and support. God Bless!



STILL IN THE SADDLE

At age 77, Dave Dahl of Fort Pierre is nearing the completion of his 2,000th saddle and has no plans to slow down anytime soon. *Photos by Billy Gibson*

Saddle-maker Dave Dahl of Fort Pierre delights in helping bronc riders bring home championship buckles and purses

Billy Gibson

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Dave Dahl will probably never win a hand model contest. Dahl's digits are gnarled, bent and puffy after nearly a half-century of hard labor producing bronc saddles for dozens of rodeo champions.

Dahl is quick to point out, however, that looks can be very deceiving: his mitts are as strong and dependable and productive as they've ever been, seasoned with decades of experience. At the age of 77, Dahl is still going strong creating saddles out of his shop in downtown Fort Pierre. Incredibly, he's still keeping his customary pace of hand-crafting nearly 60 high-

performance saddles a year.

"Somebody once said if your hands aren't moving, you ain't making money," Dahl chuckled.

During the last week of December, Dahl was busy dashing out his 56th saddle of 2021. That saddle, commissioned by a Canadian bronc riding champion, was No. 1,924 of Dahl's career. Yes, Dahl does keep count, stamping every saddle that leaves the shop. He's already anticipating reaching the 2,000 mark.

He's considering loaning that milestone saddle to Fort Pierre's Casey Tibbs Museum so that visitors can see the brand that's catapulted dozens of rodeo competitors to the top.

"There's actually two that are marked 1,000," Dahl said. Turns out that Glen

O'Neill ended up with the first one, but then Dahl's daughter Darcy Harper also received a commemorative version for roping events. Incidentally, No. 1,800 is displayed in the North Dakota Rodeo Hall of Fame where Dahl was inducted in 2017 for both his riding and his other contributions to the sport.

The list of riders who have won titles from the swells of a Dahl saddle is endless and includes champions from Alberta to Aberdeen to Australia: CoBurn Bradshaw, Cody DeMoss, Clay Elliott, Chuck Schmidt, Jake Watson, Tom Reeves, Jeff Willert, Taos Muncy, Zeke Thurston, Cort Scheer, Wade Sundell, Kyle Whitaker and so many more that Dahl can hardly keep up. Eight Dahl saddles were at the 2021 PRCA Nationals in Las Vegas.

Pro riders enjoy collecting purses and Dahl delights in helping them reach their goals. He knows how hard it is not only to stay on a spirited bucking bronc

for a few seconds but also how difficult it is to make a dollar at it.

Dahl recalls his own limited days as a card-carrying professional when he won several buckles on the PRCA circuit before taking his saddle-making business full-time in the summer of 1974.

Bronc riding set a fire in Dahl's soul at an early age, growing up on the family farm in Keene, N.D., as one of 11 children. He competed for New Town High School and later went on to claim a national collegiate title as team captain for Black Hills State in 1967. A year after graduating with a bachelor's degree, Dahl also won the South Dakota Rodeo Association's saddle bronc title.

While he taught school for three years, Dahl eventually decided to make saddle-crafting his life's work. Dahl's friend and fellow rider Dick Jones got him interested in the craft and the two set up shop in an old abandoned drug store building next to the bank in Fort Pierre. In 1986, the bank decided to open a drive-through lane so the business moved across the street to its present location where Dahl runs Diamond D Saddle Shop and also manages a western clothing store adjacent to the shop.

Dahl plans on keeping his hands hard at work with no end in sight. He stays



Dahl's phone number is on the speed-dial list of collegiate rodeo coaches in several states across the country. At left, Dahl applies his trademark stamp to one of his saddles.

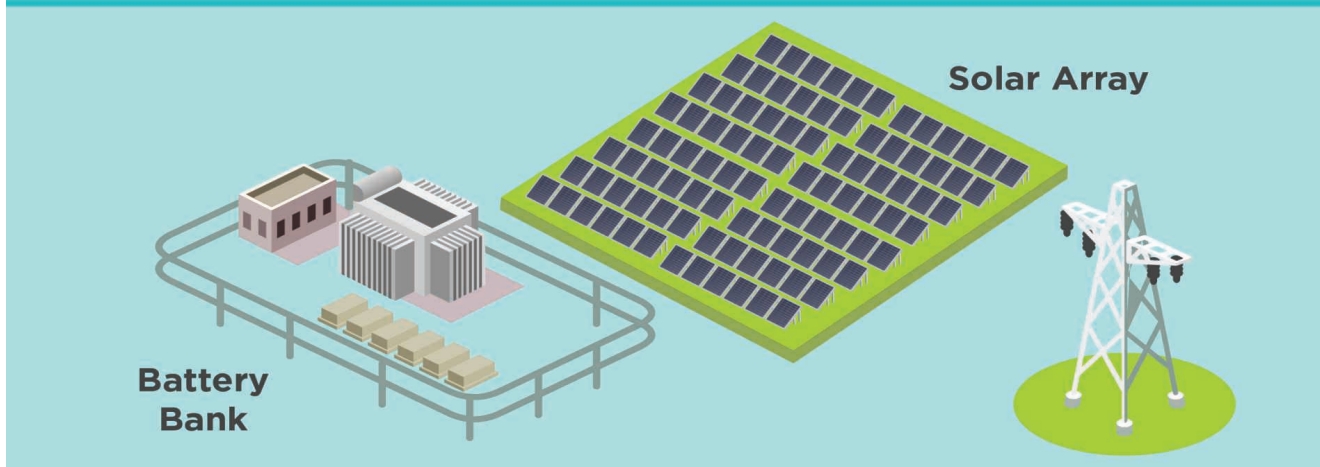
as busy as ever while participation in rodeo continues on an upward growth trajectory. College rodeo coaches in Missouri, Texas, Oklahoma, California and other states have Dahl on their speed-dial lists. He said he recently received a call from someone wanting him to fit a saddle for her 11-year-old child.

"It's just really a booming sport," he

said. "The training is better, there are better horses, there's better TV coverage of the sport and there's more money out there to be made. There are still a lot of ranch kids who grew up on horses and know how to ride. And they like to compete to see who's the best. There's so much work and I still enjoy it, so I don't plan on jumping out of the saddle anytime soon."

THE FUTURE OF ENERGY STORAGE

A new form of battery storage technology, known as the iron-air battery, could potentially provide long-duration energy storage for hundreds of hours. Long-duration energy storage will be crucial for adding more solar and wind energy to the electric grid since renewable energy is dependent on the weather and may not always be available when needed.



New Tech Alert: Iron-Air batteries hold the promise of providing long-term energy storage capability

Maria Kanevsky

As the electric grid continues to evolve, new technologies are being developed to help advance the grid of the future. One of these technologies is a new form of battery storage technology called the iron-air battery, which could potentially provide long-duration energy storage for hundreds of hours.

Current battery technologies can only offer storage for tens of hours, meaning the innovative iron-air battery could provide energy for roughly 10 times longer than existing grid-scale batteries. This new technology could help ensure grid reliability even with extreme weather, such as hurricanes or powerful thunderstorms. Long-duration energy storage will also be crucial for adding more solar and wind energy to the grid since renewable energy is dependent on the weather and may not always be

available when we need it. New iron-air batteries could provide the missing link by storing excess energy to be used when the sun isn't shining or the wind isn't blowing.

The battery technology itself is made up of thousands of small iron pellets that develop rust when exposed to oxygen. This process discharges the battery. When the oxygen is removed, the pellets revert back to iron, which then charges the battery. According to Form Energy, the startup company developing this new technology, this process is known as the principle of "reversible rusting." Since the battery technology mainly uses the abundant and cheap resources of water, air and iron, the technology is relatively low-cost. These resources also make the technology relatively safe since there are no heavy metals, and also make the batteries simpler to recycle.

A key feature of these batteries is their

low cost, with Form Energy promising a price of less than \$20 per kWh. That price is about one-tenth the cost of lithium-ion battery technology, which is currently the cheapest battery technology on the market.

Individual iron-air batteries are about the size of a washing machine, making it easy to group many batteries together into a larger, scalable system. The size of the battery module group can vary, depending on the storage needed at a specific site. This means the batteries can be placed in a variety of areas, from rural to urban, to meet energy needs.

While this technology may be a solution for long-duration energy storage, the battery is not yet ready at the commercial level - although it is close. Form Energy estimates the battery should be ready by 2025.

Given the importance of long-duration energy storage for future of the grid, other start-ups are also looking to develop long-duration battery storage technology.

In the meantime, electric utilities can start to understand where this technology may potentially fit within their own systems to make the grid more resilient.

Electric co-ops hold discussions with lawmakers and community leaders

Billy Gibson

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In preparing for the 2022 Legislative Session, electric cooperative leaders from across the state held several local forums to engage in wide-ranging discussions with elected officials.

Representatives from Basin Electric, East River, Rushmore Electric, the South Dakota Rural Electric Association (SDREA) and many distribution cooperatives invited lawmakers and community leaders to engage in a dialogue focusing on the latest developments in the electric utility industry.

Electric cooperatives will continue to participate in meetings and forums throughout the Legislative Session, which is scheduled to conclude on March 10.

Ken Schlimgen, general manager of Central Electric in Mitchell, served as host of the last of the pre-session forums. Schlimgen welcomed the local lawmakers in attendance and went over some of the programs the co-op is pursuing to provide better service to its members.

Schlimgen showed a slide of the cooperative's small solar array constructed outside the headquarters office. He said the array allows the cooperative to offer members a first-hand look at how solar energy works. Members are also shown statistical data on how much electricity the array is producing at any given time.

This kind of real-time information



Ken Schlimgen, general manager of Central Electric based in Mitchell, describes how the cooperative is investing in an electric all-terrain vehicle to educate members about how EVs work and their potential for curbing greenhouse gas emissions. *Photos by Billy Gibson*

is important for members to understand how renewable resources such as solar and wind produce clean power, Schlimgen said. It's also important for members to understand the limitations of these sources.

"We discovered the first year we had this array that it performed at about 20 percent below the projections that were given by the manufacturer," he said.

Schlimgen also shared photos of the cooperative's Polaris Electric Ranger XP Kinetic UTV. He said the vehicle is rated at 110 horsepower and has a towing capacity of 2,500 lbs.: "This is something we can use on a practical level and also show members when they request more information about electric-powered vehicles."

House Majority Leader Kent Peterson was in attendance and noted lawmakers have considered presenting a bill regarding the licensing of electric UTVs.

"Given the rapid growth of the EV industry, this is something we'll have to consider at some point. It's great to have an opportunity like this to talk with the co-ops directly and get the useful information we need to make the right decisions," Peterson said.

Trevor Jones, general manager of SDREA, previewed some of the legislative issues that could be addressed during the 2022 session, including

issues surrounding the expansion of a network of electric vehicle charging stations and tax exemptions for data centers that consume large amounts of electrical power.

Chris Studer of East River Electric provided an overview of the cooperative's Renewable Energy Credit program. Participating consumers can sign up to receive credits or Green Tags for using renewable energy that comes from several wind farms that supply energy to the cooperative. Studer said the cost of participating in the program can vary among distribution co-ops.

Sen. Josh Klumb of Dist. 20 expressed his thanks to the co-op for organizing and hosting the forum.

"The application of these new technologies is something that will have a direct impact on our citizens for generations to come. In terms of doing our jobs as legislators, there's simply no substitute for this kind of interaction."



Chris Studer of East River Electric details the cooperative's REC Program.



**Valentine's Day
February 14**

To have your event listed on this page, send complete information, including date, event, place and contact to your local electric cooperative. Include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Information must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to your event. Please call ahead to confirm date, time and location of event.

To view the publication's master event calendar, scan the QR code below:



Or visit <https://sdrea.coop/cooperative-connections-event-calendar> to view more upcoming events.

JANUARY 22
Reba McEntire
Denny Sanford Premier Center,
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

JANUARY 28-29
Deadwood Pro Snocross Races
Days of '76 Rodeo Grounds,
Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

JANUARY 28-29
27th Annual Dinner Theater
Reliance Legion Hall, Reliance,
SD, call 605-730-0553 for
more info and tickets

JANUARY 28-31
Lead Winterfest
Various Locations, Lead, SD,
call 605-584-1100

**JANUARY 28-
FEBRUARY 6**
**Black Hills Stock Show &
Rodeo**
Central States Fairgrounds &
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center,
Rapid City, SD, 605-355-3861

JANUARY 29-30
DTGCA Gun Show
National Field Archery Building,
Yankton, SD, 605-731-9154

FEBRUARY 4-6
Fiddler on the Roof
Washington Pavilion, Sioux
Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

FEBRUARY 5
**Lake Hendricks
Improvement Association
Ice Fishing Derby**
Hendricks, MN, contact Tim at
507-828-2113 for registration
and more information

FEBRUARY 9-12
**Watertown Winter Farm
Show**
Codington County Extension
Complex, Watertown, SD,
605-886-5814

FEBRUARY 11
Calamity's Shindig
Homestake Adams Research
& Cultural Center, Deadwood,
SD, 605-722-4800

FEBRUARY 11-12
Bulls & Broncs
Expo Center at the W.H. Lyon
Fairgrounds, Sioux Falls, SD,
605-367-7178

FEBRUARY 11-13
**Black Hills Sports Show &
Outdoor Expo**
Monument Arena, Rapid City,
SD, visit bhssportsshow.com
for more information

FEBRUARY 12
Lakota Games on Ice
3200 Indian Village Road,
Mitchell, SD, 605-996-5473

FEBRUARY 12-13
**DTGCA Sioux Falls Trophy
Show (The Big One)**
Sioux Falls Convention Center,
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-280-2438

FEBRUARY 18-28
Black Hills Film Festival
Various Locations in Rapid
City, Hot Springs, Hill City and
Spearfish, SD, visit www.blackhillsfilmfestival.org for more
information

FEBRUARY 19
Sioux Empire on Tap
Denny Sanford Premier
Center, Sioux Falls, SD, visit
siouxempireontap.com for
more info and tickets

FEBRUARY 25-26
Mardi Gras Weekend
Main Street, Deadwood, SD,
605-578-1876

**FEBRUARY 25-27,
MARCH 3-5**
Making God Laugh
Grand Opera House, Pierre,
SD, 605-224-7826

FEBRUARY 26
The Music of John Williams
Washington Pavilion, Sioux
Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

MARCH 3-5
The 39 Steps
Orpheum Theater Center,
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

MARCH 10-13
**Annual Sioux Empire
Sportsmen's Show**
Sioux Falls Arena &
Convention Center, Sioux
Falls, SD, visit www.siouxfallssportsshow.com for more
info and tickets

MARCH 12
**28 Below Fatbike Race,
Ride and Tour**
Spearfish Canyon Lodge, Lead,
SD, visit www.28below.com
for more info and to register

**Note: Please make sure to
call ahead to verify the event
is still being held.**