



# Volts and Jolts

Published monthly for the members of  
**RED LAKE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, Inc.**

*One of the Minnkota Power Systems*

SERVING THE FOUR-COUNTY AREA OF MARSHALL, PENNINGTON, RED LAKE AND POLK

VOL. 47 – NO. 3

RED LAKE FALLS (RED LAKE COUNTY), MINNESOTA 56750

JANUARY 2012

## Member Meetings

Opportunity for information,  
discussion, fellowship

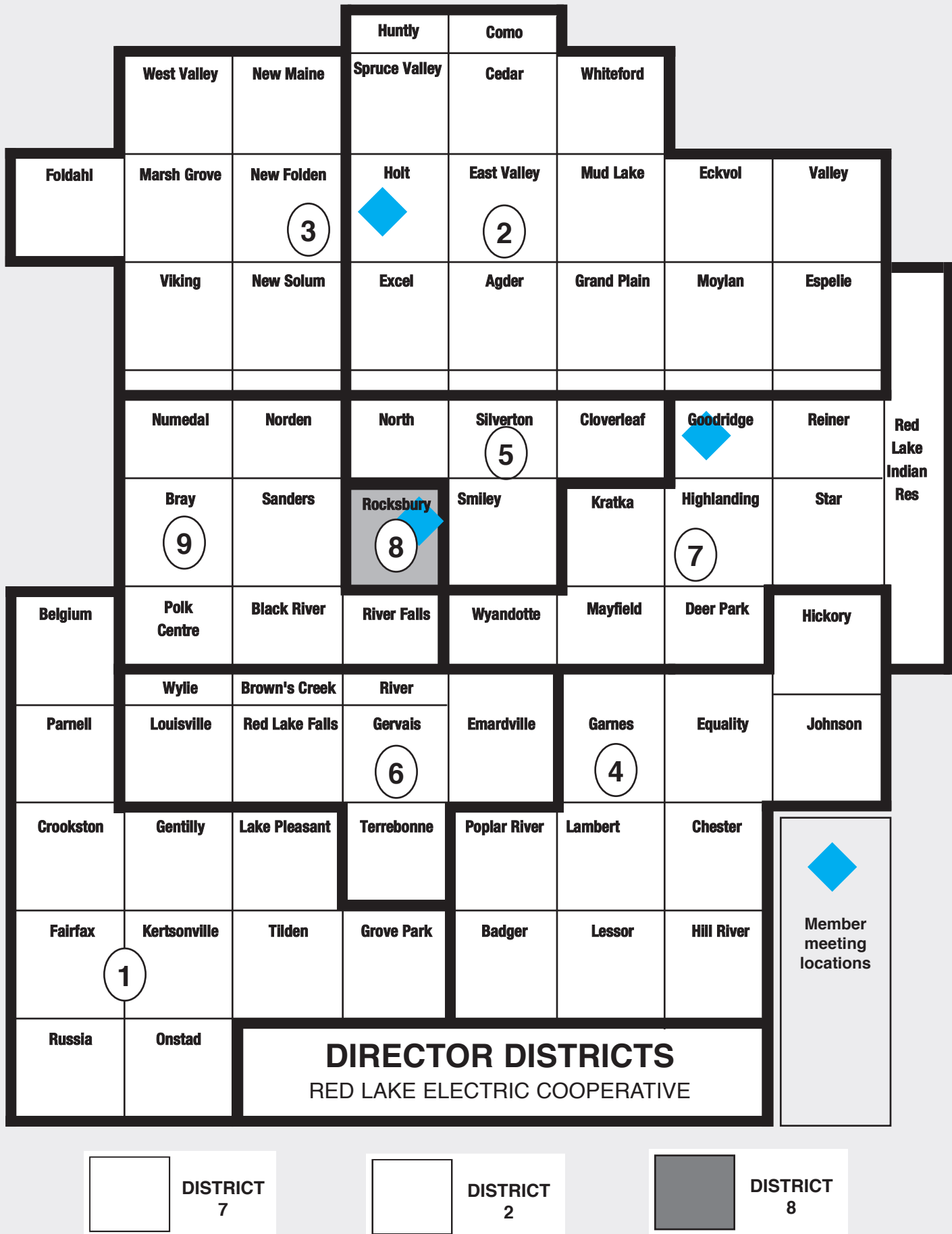
Meetings for the members of Red Lake Electric Cooperative will be held at four locations within the Cooperative's service territory. Meetings will be held within Districts 2, 7 and 8.

The meetings are held to inform attendees on current issues and programs associated with the Cooperative. Official business will be conducted at the four district meetings, which will include the election of a director candidate.

Even though a meeting may not be scheduled within the district in which you reside, you are welcome to attend a meeting of your choice. Anyone requiring special access or assistance at any one of the meeting sites should call Red Lake Electric in advance so arrangements can be made. Door prizes will be awarded and lunch will be served at each meeting.

## 2012 Member Meeting Schedule

Day, Date, Time	Meeting	Location
Tuesday, Jan. 31, 7:00 p.m.	District 7	Faith Lutheran Church, Goodridge
Monday, Feb. 6, 1:30 p.m.	District 2	Nazareth Lutheran Church, Holt
Monday, Feb. 6, 7:00 p.m.	District 8	St. John Lutheran School 15671 158th St NE Thief River Falls



### MEMBER MEETING DISTRICTS

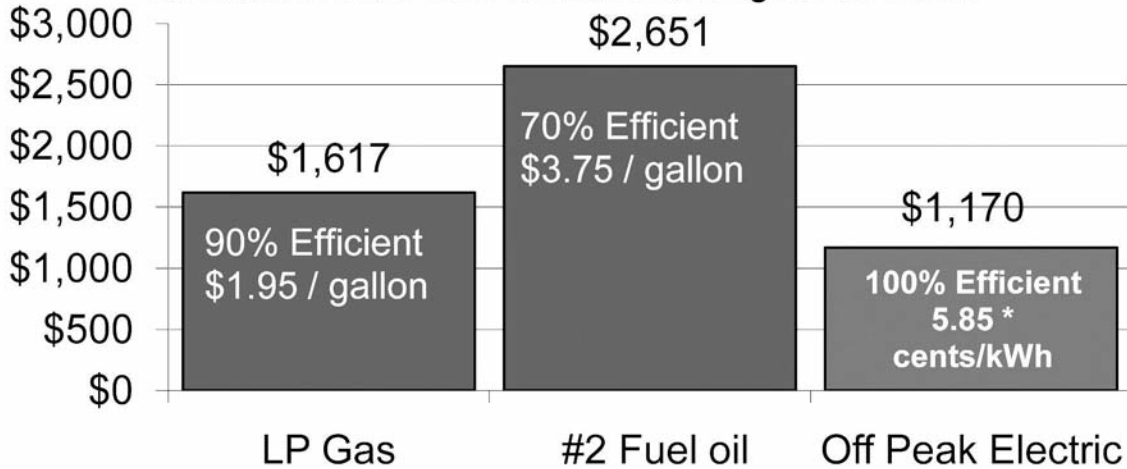
### QUICK TAKES

A look at some statistics from your Red Lake Electric Cooperative

Environmental upgrades to Minnkota's generation plant has increased the rate Red Lake Electric Cooperative pays Minnkota Power for wholesale energy. In turn, Red Lake Electric members pay more for energy this winter than a year ago. Even with the increase in rates from 2011, Red Lake Electric Cooperative members who heat with Off-Peak energy have annual heating costs favorable to other fuels as shown in the chart below.

### Heat Cost Comparison

Estimated Annual Cost to heat an average sized home.



\* Long-Term kWh rate includes Renewable Energy Surcharge

## Conservation incentives to continue

The "Power Savers" Conservation Improvement Program (CIP) incentives will continue throughout 2012 much the same as in the past. This will be the fourth consecutive year that incentives are being offered for conservation measures.

Incentives offered for residential customer as part of the Residential Prescriptive Program include: CFL bulbs; LED bulbs and down light fixtures; Energy Star clothes washers; controlled energy efficient water heaters, 80 gallons or greater; programmable thermostats; ECM blower motors; qualifying air source (4810003.02 Jeffrey Dahlen) and ground source heat pumps; supplemental electric heat with an air source heat pump; mini split/ductless air source heat pumps.

As part of the Business Prescriptive program, incentives offered for business customers includes: lighting, new construction and existing retrofits; VFD measures and food service measures; many HVAC measures similar to the residential measures but also including qualifying air conditioning equipment.

Business Custom incentives are also available for energy saving measures not outlined in the prescriptive program. These incentives are (7417004.01 Daniel W. Svedarsky) determined by the cost



of the measure, the payback on the measure, and the potential kilowatt hour savings.

CIP forms are available at Red Lake Electric Cooperative's office, the forms can be downloaded from Red Lake Electric's website at [www.redlakeelectric.com](http://www.redlakeelectric.com), or the forms (5209003.05 Dean Dalen) can be obtained from the contractor doing the work. When submitting a form, a copy of the invoice from the installing contractor, or from the business the qualifying item was purchased, must be included. For HVAC measures an AHRI certificate of qualification must also be included.

All measures completed in 2012 must be submitted within the year. For additional information visit Red Lake Electric's website or call the Cooperative office at 218-253-2168 or 800-245-6068.

### In this month's Volts and Jolts

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Manager's Comments

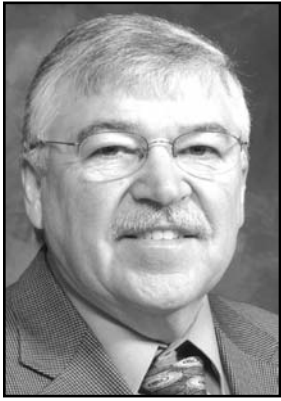
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Double circuit pole is changed

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ND haze deadline extended



## Manager's Comments

by Roger Johanneck



## 2012 budget approved; no rate increase, renewable energy surcharge decreased

The 2012 operating budget was presented to and approved by your board of directors at their December 28th board meeting.

There is no rate increase projected in the 2012 budget. The rate increase that went into effect with the October 2011 billing was set to provide enough revenue to cover expenses in 2012.

The board also approved to decrease the Renewable Energy Surcharge from five mills (half cent) per kWh to 3.5 mills per kWh effective January 11, 2012. Members will see the reduced rate beginning with the bill they receive in February. The decrease in the Renewable Energy Surcharge was made possible because Minnkota Power Cooperative lowered its wholesale Energy Surcharge rate to Red Lake Electric Cooperative (RLEC) and Minnkota's member systems.

RLEC's total cost of providing service to the members is budgeted at \$13.1 million, an increase of \$373 thousand or 2.9 percent above 2011. The majority (\$337 thousand) of RLEC's increased cost will be wholesale power cost. Minnkota raised rates on March of 2011 so 2011 had only nine months of energy billing at the new rate and 2012's wholesale power bill will include 12 months of the current rate.

Wholesale power is expected to cost just over \$10 million in 2012 and makes up 77 percent of the

\$13.1 million it will cost to provide RLEC members energy and electric service. Non-wholesale power expenses or RLEC's distribution costs are budgeted to increase 0.2 percent in 2012.

The Cooperative's budgeted energy sales for 2012 was set to be slightly less than 2011 to reflect (229004.06 Darrell G. Hetland) energy efficiency improvements made to home heating systems across the service area. Historical energy use trends show gradual sales growth over time but annual fluctuations up and down from year to year are a normal part of RLEC's history. The current warmer than normal winter already has had an impact on energy sales so it is looking like a conservative estimate on energy use by the members is appropriate.

Included with our 2012 budget for revenue and expenses is our plan for capital improvements. In addition to the normal replacement and maintenance to the electric distribution system, we have plans to add (3827002.02 Andrew Skaar) new distribution equipment and tie-lines that will help us carry out our mission of being a reliable energy provider for our members.

It is our intention that the 2012 budget and our effort to carry this plan out will keep us on course to remain financially strong so that we can continue to be a source of reliable, competitively priced energy

for you in 2012 and beyond.

### Membership Meetings

It is that time of year again, when the Cooperative holds its District-Membership meetings throughout our service area. I encourage you to check out the meeting schedule included in this month's issue of the *Volts and Jolts* and welcome members to join us for one of the meetings located in your area. Our meeting format will be similar to previous years where we will provide information that we think you will find interesting and helpful, give you a chance to ask questions, and visit with RLEC staff and neighbors over pie and coffee. Hope to see you there.

## Thank you

Thank you to the following members and friends for your hospitality.

Larry Olson  
Gary Nelson  
John Mattson  
David Ste. Marie  
Randy Myhre  
Darin Myhre  
Alice Bluemke  
Mr. & Mrs. Willard Brunelle  
Mr. & Mrs. William Sanner  
Mr. & Mrs. Russell Gervais

### VOTING DELEGATE CERTIFICATION

Members that are corporations, churches, townships, schools or other government units may vote at the district meeting. This form designating the voting delegate must be filled out, signed by officers and presented at the district meeting registration desk.

The \_\_\_\_\_ has, at an official  
name of member

meeting, designated \_\_\_\_\_  
name of delegate

to represent us at the 2012 District Meeting of the Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Attest \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman or President

Attest \_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk or Secretary

## STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc. is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Rural Electrification Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provide that no person in the United States on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or handicap shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is Roger Johanneck, Manager.

Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above from and/or file a written complaint with this organization; or the Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250; or the Administrator, Rural Electrification Administration, Washington, D.C. 20250. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.

## RED LAKE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, Inc. VOLTS & JOLTS

(USPS 663-400)

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### OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT .....Bonnie Christians  
VICE PRESIDENT .....Robert Finstad  
SECRETARY-TREASURER .....Mark Hanson  
DIRECTORS .....Kelly Lundeen,  
Steven Linder, Peter Mosbeck,  
Colette Kujava, Randy Versdahl, Stacy Blawat  
Subscription Rate .....\$2.50 per year

## NOTICE

Hidden within the text of the articles of this issue of the Volts & Jolts are the names and account numbers of five RLEC members. They will appear within the articles in parenthesis as such (9999999.99 Roger P. Member). If you find your name and account number, clip it out and send it with your next payment. You will be credited with \$5 on your electric bill.

# Annual Meeting March 28

Red Lake Electric Cooperative members are encouraged to mark their calendars for the Cooperative's annual meeting. The meeting will be called at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 28, at the Ralph Engelstad Arena in Thief River Falls.



## Director elections to be held

Red Lake Electric Cooperative members in District 2, 7 and 8 will soon elect directors to represent them. The initial elections will take place at the upcoming district meetings. Final election will occur at the Cooperative's annual meeting March 28 if there is more than one nominee.

Districts 2, 7 and 8 are currently represented by Stacy Blawat, Kelly Lundeen and Robert Finstad, respectively.

Directors must be members residing in the district they represent and have no conflicts of interest regarding Red Lake Electric Cooperative. Any candidate for director must have his or her name stated as the "member" on the Cooperative's records.

For more information on director qualifications and responsibilities contact Roger Johanneck, General Manager, at 800-245-6068 or 218-253-2168.

### Red Lake Electric Cooperative

## Director qualifications requirements

No member shall be eligible to become or remain a director who:

- Is not a member of the Cooperative, receiving electric service at the member's primary residence in the district from which the director is elected.

- Within three years preceding a director candidate's nomination was an employee of the Cooperative.

- Is or becomes, or at any time during the three (3) years preceding a director candidate's nomination shall have been employed by a labor union, which represents, or has represented, or has endeavored to represent any employees of the Cooperative.

- Is a parent, spouse or cohabitant of any employee of the Cooperative.

- Is a person who is a parent, spouse or cohabitant of an incumbent director who is not up for re-election at that time.

- Is in any way employed by or substantially financially interested in an enterprise competing with the Cooperative or any Cooperative-affiliated businesses.

- Is or becomes the full-time employee or agent of, or who is or becomes the full-time employer or principal of, another director.

## Director nomination and election procedure

The procedure for which directors can be nominated and elected for Red Lake Electric Cooperative is outlined in Article II, Section 10, of the Cooperative's Bylaws. That section reads as follows:

**SECTION 10. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF DIRECTORS.** (a) Nomination at District Meetings. Not less than forty days nor more than sixty days before any meeting at which directors are to be elected, the board of directors shall call a separate meeting of the members of each district from which directors are to be elected, at a suitable place in such district for the purpose of selecting a candidate for director to represent the members located within such district. The notice of such meeting shall be delivered to each member located in such district as provided in Section 2 of this Article and shall indicate the district to which such member belongs. The notice shall state that nominations for a director are to be made at the meeting. The district meeting shall be called to order by the director representing the district or by another designated representative of the board of directors, or in his absence, by any members residing in the district. The members shall then proceed to elect a chairman, who shall be someone other than a director, and who shall appoint a secretary to act for the duration of the meeting. Members of other districts present at the meeting may be heard but shall have no vote. Nominations for candidates for director shall be made from the floor at the meeting, and any member residing in the district shall have the right to nominate one candidate. The meeting shall remain open for nominations until no further nominations are forthcoming.

Candidates must be members residing in the district and must possess the qualifications for director specified in Section 2 of Article III of these bylaws. Voting shall be by ballot and proxy voting shall not be permitted at any district meeting. Each member may vote for one candidate. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared the official candidate of the district. In case of a tie, the winner shall be determined by the flip of a coin. The minutes of the district meeting shall set forth, among other matters, the name of each person nominated at the meeting and the number of votes received by each and shall specify the official candidate of the district. A certified copy of the minutes signed by the Secretary and the Chairman of the district meeting shall be delivered to the secretary of the Cooperative at the following meeting of the board. (b) Nomination of Directors by Petition. Nomination for director can also be made by petition. Fifteen (15) or more members may make a nomination in writing to the Secretary over their signatures not less than thirty (30) days prior to the annual meeting. This petition nomination must be in the format prescribed by the Secretary. Blank nomination petitions shall be available to all members at the Cooperative office. All petition nominees shall be listed in the notice of annual meeting and their names shall be printed on the election ballot. (c) Election of Directors. At the annual meeting, the Secretary of the Cooperative shall place in nomination the names of the official candidates of each district. Election of directors shall be by printed or mimeographed ballot, separate ballots to be provided for each district, listing the candidates in alphabetical order. Only members of a district shall be entitled to vote for director to be elected from that district, and each member or member's spouse shall be entitled to vote for one candidate from the district, in which he is a member. The candidate from each receiving the highest number of votes at this meeting shall be declared elected as director. In the case of a tie vote, the winner shall be determined by the flip of a coin. Notwithstanding anything contained in this section, failure to comply with any of the provisions of this section shall not affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any election of directors.

## NOTICE TO MEMBERS

The Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc., of Red Lake Falls, as an operating electric utility in the state of Minnesota, is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from co-generators and small power producers.

The cooperative will provide information relating to the said interconnections to all interested member-consumers of the cooperative free of charge upon request.

Any disputes between the cooperative and its member-consumers over interconnection, sales and purchases are subject to resolution by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.



# Recipe corner

### Broccoli Noodle Side Dish

6 c. (8 oz.) uncooked wide noodles  
3 to 4 garlic cloves, minced  
1/4 c. olive or vegetable oil  
4 c. broccoli florets (about 1 lb.)  
1/2 lb. fresh mushrooms, thinly sliced  
1/2 tsp. dried thyme  
1/4 tsp. pepper  
1 tsp. salt, optional  
Cook the noodles according to package directions. Meanwhile, in a skillet, saute garlic in oil until tender. Add broccoli; saute for 4 minutes or until crisp-tender. Add mushrooms, thyme, pepper and salt if desired; saute for 2 to 3 minutes. Drain noodles and add broccoli mixture. Yields 8 servings.

### Beef and Barley Soup

1 lb. steak, cubed  
1/2 tsp. thyme  
1/2 tsp. black pepper  
2 cloves garlic  
2 bay leaves  
1 lb. carrots, sliced  
1 can (16 oz.) crushed tomatoes  
1 to 1-1/2 c. barley  
Place steak in stockpot and cover with water. Simmer until meat is tender. Do not drain; liquid will serve as beef stock.  
Add thyme, black pepper, garlic, bay leaves and carrots. Simmer for 1 hour, or until carrots are tender.  
Add tomatoes and barley, and simmer for 1 additional hour, or until barley is tender. Add additional water as needed while soup is simmering. Yields 4 to 6 servings.

### Clam Chowder Soup

1 lb. bacon, diced  
3 large onions, chopped  
4 large potatoes, peeled and cubed  
2 c. water  
3 small cans minced clams  
1/2 tsp. black pepper  
1 tsp. sugar  
Pinch thyme  
1/4 c. butter  
1/4 c. flour  
4 c. milk  
1 can evaporated milk  
In skillet, fry bacon until crispy. Add onions and cook until browned.  
Add potatoes and water, and cook until potatoes are tender. Stir in clams, pepper, sugar and thyme, and let simmer.  
In separate pan, over low heat, melt butter. Whisk in flour. Add milk a little at a time while continuing to whisk until white sauce starts to bubble around edges. Pour white sauce into clam mixture and let cool.  
Just before serving, stir in evaporated milk. Cover and simmer over low heat for 10 minutes, or until heated through. Do not boil, as it will ruin the texture of the soup. Yields 3 quarts.

### Cheesy Chili Mac

1 roll (1 lb.) original recipe sausage  
1 small onion, diced  
1/2 c. diced green pepper  
1 can (15 oz.) tomato sauce  
1 can (14.5 oz.) diced tomatoes  
1-1/2 c. water  
2 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce  
1 Tbsp. chili powder, or to taste  
1 tsp. Italian seasoning  
1 c. uncooked elbow macaroni  
1 c. grated cheddar cheese  
1 bunch green onions, chopped, optional  
In large saucepan over medium heat, cook sausage, onion and green pepper, breaking up and crumbling with fork, until sausage is browned and onion and green pepper are tender.  
Stir in tomato sauce, tomatoes, water, Worcestershire sauce, chili powder and Italian seasoning. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer for 15 minutes.  
Stir in macaroni. Cover and simmer for an additional 15 to 20 minutes, or until macaroni is tender.  
Serve in individual bowls topped with shredded cheddar cheese and chopped green onions, if desired. Yields 4 to 6 servings.

### Dijon Sirloin Tips

1-1/4 lb. sirloin tips, cubed  
2 Tbsp. butter or margarine  
1 Tbsp. cooking oil  
3 c. sliced fresh mushrooms  
1 garlic clove, minced  
1/2 c. beef broth  
1/4 c. white wine vinegar  
1-1/2 tsp. soy sauce  
2 tsp. Dijon mustard  
2 tsp. cornstarch  
1/2 c. whipping cream  
Hot cooked noodles  
Chopped fresh parsley, optional  
In a large skillet, brown the meat in butter and oil; transfer to an ungreased 2-quart baking dish. In the same skillet, saute mushrooms and garlic until mushrooms are tender, about 3 minutes. Pour mushrooms, garlic and drippings over meat. Cover and bake at 300 degrees for 2 hours or until meat is tender.  
In a skillet, combine the broth, vinegar and soy sauce; bring to a boil. Boil for 2 minutes; set aside. Combine mustard, cornstarch and cream; stir into broth mixture. Bring to a boil; boil for 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Drain juices from baking dish into broth mixture. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until thickened and bubbly. Add beef mixture. Serve over noodles. Garnish with parsley if desired. Yields 4 servings.

### Cracker-Coated Fried Perch

2 eggs  
1/2 c. milk  
2 c. butter-flavored cracker crumbs  
1/2 tsp. garlic salt  
1/4 tsp. dried oregano  
1/4 tsp. dried tarragon  
1/4 tsp. pepper  
1 lb. perch fillets  
Cooking oil  
In a shallow bowl, beat eggs and milk. In another shallow bowl, combine cracker crumbs, garlic salt, oregano, tarragon and pepper. Dip the perch in egg mixture, then coat with crumbs. Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat. Fry fish for several minutes on each side or until it flakes easily with a fork. Yields 4 servings.

## Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc. Operating Report

### MONTHLY COMPARISON

	NOVEMBER 2010	NOVEMBER 2011
Total Revenue .....	\$ 867,199	\$ 1,095,231
Total Margins .....	\$ 21,300	\$ (3,399)
Cost of Power .....	\$ 647,217	\$ 877,115
KWH's Purchased .....	11,663,677	12,096,679
Capital Credits Paid to Estates ...	\$ 8,813	\$ 9,922

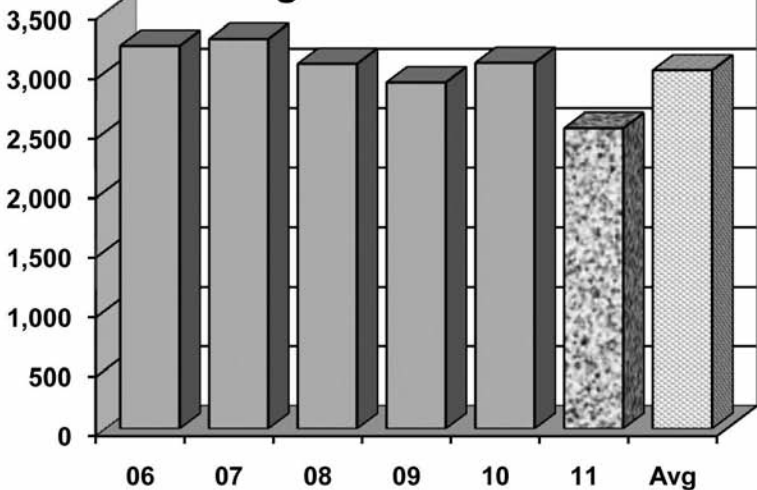
### YEAR TO DATE COMPARISON

	NOVEMBER 2010	NOVEMBER 2011
Total Revenue .....	\$ 9,912,732	\$ 11,501,752
Total Margins .....	\$ 411,163	\$ 135,210
Cost of Power .....	\$ 6,781,297	\$ 8,646,507
KWH's Purchased .....	120,985,440	125,646,350
New Service Connections .....	45	62
Customers Served .....	5,204	5,213
Capital Credits Paid to Estates ...	\$ 82,214	\$ 80,652
Miles of Line		
Overhead .....	2,325	2,324
Underground .....	235	239

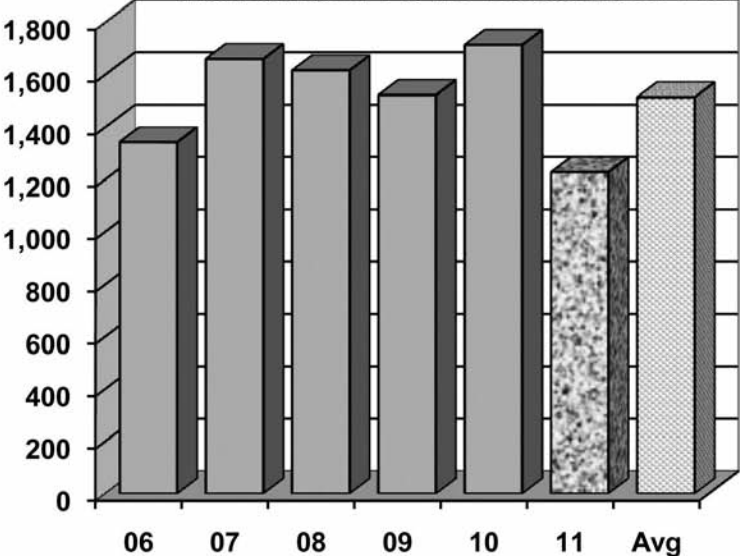
# DEGREE DAYS

To determine degree days, you must calculate the daily mean temperature for the time period you are measuring. Degree day computation is based on the assumption that a building does not require any heat if the outside temperature averages 65 degrees during a 24-hour period. To obtain a degree day figure, the high temperature and the low temperature for the day are added and the total divided by two. That figure is then subtracted from 65. For example, if the high temperature was 30 degrees and the low temperature 10 degrees, the figure would be 30+10=40; 40/2=20; 65-20=45. This would be a 45-degree day. The higher the degree day figure, the more heat required to warm your home.

### YEAR TO DATE DEGREE DAYS August 20 to December 20



### DEGREE DAYS November 20 to December 20



### Self-Inking Stamps

*Available at the Gazette*

Self-Inking Stamps are the perfect choice!  
Signature, address, professional, logo  
and much more! Available in a variety of  
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email [rlfgaz@gvtel.com](mailto:rlfgaz@gvtel.com) for pricing  
and additional information.

### RLF Fire Department

#### Dear RLE Trust:

The Marshall County Board of Commissioners and Marshall County Social Services wish to extend their deep appreciation for your donation this Christmas season. Thank you for donating to the Christmas projects, because of your generosity, food baskets were delivered to 185 people and 167 children received gifts from the Sharing Tree project. Your willingness of giving and caring are much appreciated.

A special thank you for the generous grant of \$500, it was used toward the food baskets and gifts for the children in the county. This dollar amount was a huge help in making these gifts possible.

Working together to reach out and do a kind deed brought some extra Christmas joy to many elderly, families and children. May the joy you passed on to them come back to you. Thank you so much for your generosity.

Sincerely,  
Stacy Urbaniak  
Marshall Co. Social Services

#### Dear RLE Trust:

There are so much dedicated volunteers and generous donors that we need to say thank you to.

The Red Lake County Unit of the Salvation Army had another successful Kettle Campaign season. We were able to provide Christmas gifts to 167 low-income children, nursing home residents and group home residents through our Giving Tree program.

Our 2011 Kettle Campaign raised a total of \$2,434. We exceeded our goal this year, thanks to the generous donations from businesses, churches, and individuals. Whether you rang the bell for us, donated money, or helped in some other way – you are the reason that this program works so well and is able to help people in their time of need.

The Salvation Army is a community program; it is successful because of our generous donors and dedicated volunteers. The money raised through the Kettle Campaign will be used throughout 2012 to help families and individuals in Red Lake County who find themselves in an emergency or disaster situation.

Thank you again for your donations of time, talent, and treasure and for assisting us in our important work of helping those in need. We look forward to another successful season in 2012.

Sincerely yours,  
Kathie Johanneck  
Salvation Army Coordinator  
Red Lake County

#### Dear RLE Trust:

Thank you so much for granting the Nutrition Education Program and our after school enrichment program \$400 toward our physical activity incentives. Students are already using some of the jump ropes.

Tammie Malwitz  
Community Nutrition  
Educator  
Thief River Falls

## Top dairy herds for November DHIA

Randy Rasmussen, supervisor of the Red Lake-Pennington DHIA, put the following herds at top 10 in the association for November.

Name	Cows	% in milk	lbs. milk	test	lbs. fat	lbs. protein	lbs. protein
Northstar Dairy LLC 3X .....	1108	90	75	3.5	2.6	3.1	2.3
Walter Bros Farm .....	352	91	69	3.9	2.7	3.1	2.1
Beyer Brothers Farm .....	70	94	69	3.5	2.4	3.1	2.1
Spring Prairie Colony .....	367	86	68	3.9	2.6	3.2	2.2
Amundson Dairy .....	61	95	61	4.0	2.5	3.4	2.1
Wayra Dairy .....	280	85	58	3.8	2.2	3.3	1.9
Robert and Terri Dahlen .....	59	80	54	3.5	1.9	3.2	1.7
CB Farms LLC .....	48	98	54	3.8	2.1	3.2	1.7
BLY Dairy Inc .....	272	86	53	4.2	2.2	3.2	1.7
Danny Grunhovd .....	110	92	47	4.0	1.9	3.3	1.6

The herd averages are affected by the number of dry cows in the herd. The amount of milk or butterfat is averaged out over all the cows. This gives the farmer a record of the earning power of the herd for the month. If too many cows are included in the herd, then the average for the month may be low, even though the cow that is milking produces a lot of milk.

## Top dairy herds for December DHIA

Randy Rasmussen, supervisor of the Red Lake-Pennington DHIA, put the following herds at top 10 in the association for December.

Name	Cows	% in milk	lbs. milk	test	lbs. fat	lbs. protein	lbs. protein
Northstar Dairy LLC 3X .....	1128	90	74	3.7	2.7	3.2	2.4
Beyer Brothers Farm .....	68	96	71	3.6	2.6	3.1	2.2
Walter Bros Farm .....	356	89	68	3.9	2.7	3.1	2.1
Spring Prairie Colony .....	370	82	63	4.0	2.5	3.2	2.0
Wayra Dairy .....	289	90	63	4.0	2.5	3.2	2.0
Robert and Terri Dahlen .....	57	77	61	3.4	2.1	3.0	1.8
BLY Dairy Inc. 3X .....	272	90	58	4.7	2.7	3.2	1.9
Amundson Dairy .....	63	87	58	3.7	2.1	3.3	1.9
Mark Gladen .....	89	82	49	4.0	1.9	3.1	1.5
CB Farms LLC .....	50	92	49	3.8	1.9	3.2	1.6

The herd averages are affected by the number of dry cows in the herd. The amount of milk or butterfat is averaged out over all the cows. This gives the farmer a record of the earning power of the herd for the month. If too many cows are included in the herd, then the average for the month may be low, even though the cow that is milking produces a lot of milk.

# Snowmobile Safety Awareness Week

Gov. Mark Dayton, with the support of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association (MnUSA), has proclaimed Jan. 15 through 21 as Snowmobile Safety Awareness Week in Minnesota.

To legally ride a snowmobile in Minnesota, residents born after Dec. 31, 1976, need a valid snowmobile safety certificate.

More than 1,800 volunteer instructors teach DNR snowmobile safety courses across the state.

For more information on the dates and locations of these courses, visit the DNR website at [www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us) or call 800-366-8917.

DNR and MnUSA remind snowmobilers of a few basic safety tips:

- Don't drink and drive – Drinking and driving can be fatal. Alcohol can impair judgment and slow reaction time. Snowmobilers who have been drinking may drive too fast or race across unsafe ice. Alcohol also causes body temperature to drop at an accelerated rate, increasing the likelihood of hypothermia.
- Slow down – Speed is a contributing factor in nearly all fatal snowmobiling accidents. Drivers should drive at a pace that allows ample reaction time for any situation. When driving at night, a speed of 40 miles an hour may result in "over driving" the headlight, so the driver can't react in time to avoid danger.
- Be prepared – When traveling, bring a first aid kit, a flashlight, waterproof matches, and a com-

pass.

- Stay alert – Fatigue can reduce coordination and judgment.
  - Ice advice – Avoid traveling across bodies of water when uncertain of ice thickness and strength on lakes and ponds. Snow cover can act as a blanket to prevent safe ice from forming. Never travel in a single file when crossing bodies of water.
  - Dress for success – Use a full-size helmet, goggles or face shield to prevent injuries from twigs, stones, ice and flying debris. Clothing should be worn in layers and should be just snug enough so that no loose ends catch in the machine.
  - Watch the weather – Rapid weather changes can produce dangerous conditions.
  - Bring a buddy – Never travel alone. Most snowmobile accidents result in some personal injury. The most dangerous situations occur when a person is injured and alone. When traveling alone, tell someone the destination, planned route and expected return time.
  - Report accidents – Snowmobile operators involved in accidents resulting in medical attention, death or damage exceeding \$500 must file an official accident report through the county sheriff's office within 10 days.
- For a copy of DNR's 2011-2012 Minnesota Snowmobile Safety Laws, Rules and Regulations handbook, call 651-296-6157 or toll-free 888-646-6367. It's also available on the DNR's website at [www.dnr.state.mn.us/regulations/snowmobile/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/regulations/snowmobile/index.html).

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VOLTS AND JOLTS FEATURE OF THE MONTH

Charles Naplin focuses artistic skill and attention to detail to create miniature world for model train set

**By Heather Blodgett**  
Red Lake Electric Cooperative customer Charles Naplin harnesses electricity for his hobby. Naplin is a model train enthusiast and president of Thief River Falls Model Railroad Club. A visit to his home west of St. Hilaire reveals a shed dedicated to the hobby. Inside, the walls are lined with model train cars and engines. A breathtaking model train set layout, approximately covering one-third of the 26 by 32 foot building and triangular in shape, is the focal point of the room. The detailed layout, on which Naplin has worked on since 2006, is amazingly realistic.

Naplin wanted the layout to be a tour to the American Midwest. He starts in a town he calls Spring Valley, which is set in the Red River Valley and represents the Great Plains. A grain elevator he named Red River Co-op is located prominently on the city's main street. Many other businesses also line the street, illuminated by working lights inside, and featuring a neon-style business sign in the window of the Doctor's Office.

Naplin uses creativity by creating fictitious names for all of the places in the layout. A tribute to his heritage is evident as he named the furniture shop after is his great-grandfather calling it Apollo Furniture Company. Working streetlights line the roadway for the many cars and citizens and highlight the details he's added, such as the telephone booth, fire hydrant, and mail collection box. As the train journeys westward through North Dakota, it passes pumping oil rigs in the oil fields.

Naplin also takes inspiration from their vacations. A bus trip to Bryce Canyon, Utah with his wife, Sharon Kuester, was the motivation for the second leg of the tour. The land there is red and features "hoodoos", skinny rock formations that rise from the soil. Kuester speaks of the area as one of the most beautiful she has ever visited.

The track then heads towards the Rocky Mountains of Montana. Naplin paid careful attention to the landscape of the mountains to accurately mimic the colors and landscape of the region. The train travels through a tunnel in the mountains to the badlands of South Dakota. This area features silicone waterfalls, bushes and lichen. Another tunnel returns the train to the bustling city of Spring Valley.

Naplin has captured many aspects of life that peek out from hidden villages within the layout. A resort

A model train set layout, approximately covering one-third of the 26 by 32 foot shed at Charles Naplin's home west of St. Hilaire, is the focal point of his creative work. Naplin has worked on the detailed layout, much of it crafted by hand, since 2006.

complete with palm trees and a pool is tucked below the buffs of Utah. A farmyard scene featuring a wheat field, hay bails, tractors, animals and a barn resides at the base of the Rocky Mountains. Small communities dot the countryside throughout the scene.

Naplin has used the concept of diminishing perspective in the layout. At the front of the layout, the buildings are a larger scale. The scale becomes smaller as you look farther into the layout and up into the landscape. Naplin did this so that it seemed much farther away and created depth.

Most features of the layout are handmade by Naplin. He first built tables for the track to sit upon. Next he created the landscape. To create dimension, Naplin took styrofoam insulation sheets from the local lumberyard and glued the sheets together, similar to a layer cake. A

serrated knife and other carving tools are used to give the landscape its bones.

He then uses various techniques to give character to the landscape. Crumbled newspaper and layers of plaster gauze, which is similar to the product used to make a cast to secure broken bones, form the features. A wire brush and sandpaper perfect the texture of the topsoil. Naplin then uses acrylic paints to mimic the look of the ground. A dry brush technique is often used to create dimension within the land. Ground material, a green or brown powdery foam product, is also used to give texture to the terrain.

Naplin's talent is evident in the craftsmanship of his buildings. When constructing them, Naplin prefers basswood and styrene, but is creative and often uses a wide array of materials to add those touches that make the construction come to life.

A waterfall, fabricated from plastic and silicone, perfectly portraying rushing water, cascades from the spires and buttes of the South Dakota Badlands. A grain silo, made from scratch by Naplin, is painted silver and deep red to look like rusty metal. Naplin shaved yellow chalk and brushed the powder on the edges of the silo to create the illusion of grain dust.

Kuester testifies to his attention to detail exclaiming, "Everything he does on it has to be just so. I don't know how he even keeps track!"

A transformer changes the 115-volt alternating current electricity that runs into the heated shed to between 14 and 18 volts, which runs the N-scale train. Naplin also uses a transformer to change the alternating

current to 12 volts of direct current to power the O-scale train in the mountains of his Montana scene.

A switchboard crafted by Naplin displays the layout of the tracks and controls the direction the train runs and all of the switches direct the trains from one track to another. Naplin has wired the entire operation himself and said that often is the trickiest part.

In addition to powering the track, electricity powers the streetlights, lights inside the model buildings, and optical sensors to operate the railroad crossing lights and arms that fall and rise with the trains' movements to mimic real life crossings.

Naplin has wired the sound of train engines and horns that match the pace of the train for added authenticity. He also runs power to an electromagnet on a model crane in the junkyard for Spring Valley, as well as bubble lights in the oil rigs to give the illusion of pumping oil. A working light tops the town's water tower, which Naplin created and wired from scratch.

Naplin often gets lost in the hobby and said, "I think I'm going to spend a few hours out here and its dark already."

Kuester adds, "I often have to remind him to come in for supper because he is so involved in what he is working on out here."

"I have a lot of fun designing and constructing the scenery," Naplin explained. He got into the hobby after receiving his first train set from his parents at the age of six. Though his interest had waned over the years, he really got back into the pastime in the early nineties.

It's also a hobby he can share with his two sons and

The model train set layout created by Charles Naplin is intended to be a tour of the American Midwest.

A switchboard crafted by Charles Naplin displays the layout of the tracks and controls the direction the train runs. He wired the entire operation himself.

granddaughter. "Every time they come over, they want to come in here and see what's different," stated Naplin.

Kuester said she is glad that Naplin has so much to work on stating, "I think its wonderful. Everybody needs a hobby. He's good at it and he's artistic."

Naplin considers the project a work in progress as he has much left to do before he considers it finished. Currently, he is working on the ballasting, the rocks that line the track, to portray the scene more accurately.

His plans for the near future include a cemetery next to the church and detailing the painted lines on the roadways. Once the layout is finished, he wants to build backdrops to complete the look.

For his next project, he wants to develop a portable train layout that he can set up at various places and events.

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Charles Naplin is a model train enthusiast who built his own detailed landscape for his trains to travel.



A grain elevator Charles Naplin named Red River Co-op is located prominently on the Spring Valley's main street. Many other businesses also line the street, illuminated by working lights inside.

The walls of Charles Naplin's shed are lined with a collection of model trains and other collectible cars, engines and construction vehicles. He received his first train set at the age of six.



Charles Naplin's talent is evident in the craftsmanship of his buildings. When constructing them, he prefers basswood and styrene, but is creative and often uses a wide array of materials to add touches that make the construction come to life.



Above: Crumbled newspaper and layers of plaster gauze form the features of the landscape. A wire brush and sandpaper perfect the texture of the topsoil. Charles Naplin then uses acrylic paints to mimic the look of the ground. A dry brush technique is often used to create dimension within the land.

Right: A resort complete with palm trees and a pool is tucked below the bluffs of Utah.



# Dean and Naomi Hanson named Minnesota's 2011 Outstanding Conservationists

Dean and Naomi Hanson have been named the 2011 Outstanding Conservationists for the State of Minnesota. The Hansons and their six children were recently honored at the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts' Convention where they were chosen from the eight state finalists. Paula Mohr, editor of the *Farmer* magazine presented the award.

The Hansons live in Hickory Township in southeastern Pennington County, the same area where Dean's great grandfather settled 100 years ago. They operate a 1,300 acre livestock farm raising 160 head of Red Angus cow/calf pairs. Their crops include alfalfa, soybeans and oats.

Dean participated in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) where a prescribed grazing plan was developed and implemented. Fifteen paddocks were created with cross fencing. A well and pipeline completed the water system on the 375 acres of pasture. The majority of the farm is pasture and hay land, so erosion is minimal. The Hansons were accepted into the Conservation Stewardship Program due to their practices.

Dean and Naomi feel fortunate to have the opportunity to raise their family of six children in an agriculture setting. The backbone of their operation is the family.

Dean said, "Every decision made on the farm has a benefit for the next generation. We want them to have the same opportunity to farm if they so desire."

Their children would be the fifth generation to farm in this area. Smart decisions have been made over the last 100 years to set the stage for the next generation.



Minnesota's 2011 Outstanding Conservationists Dean and Naomi Hanson with children Carter, Faith, Gracie, Tyler, Tucker and Clancy.

# Safe use of space, portable heaters

Heating equipment is the second leading cause of home fires and home fire deaths. Heating equipment includes furnaces, fireplaces, wood stoves and portable space heaters.

Portable heaters come in many shapes and sizes and use a variety of fuels or power sources. When selecting a heater, make sure it has the label of a recognized testing laboratory, such as UL (Underwriters Laboratory), ETL (Intertek), or CSA (Canadian Standards Association). These heaters have been determined to meet specific safety standards, and manufacturers are required to provide important use and care information to the consumer.

Place any portable device at least three feet from anything that could easily catch fire (wallpaper, bedding, clothing) or be burned (pets and people). Never use heaters to dry clothes or shoes.

Buy a heater that is the correct size for the area you want to heat. Use space heaters only as an extra

source of heat. These devices are not intended to replace the home's heating system.

Space heaters need constant watching and should be turned off when you leave your home and before bedtime. For fuel-fired heaters, dangerous levels of carbon monoxide could build up or could cause a fire.

Make sure all cords on electric heaters are in good shape and checked for any wear or breaks in the insulation around the wires. Do not use a space heater with a damaged cord. While the heater is in use, check the cord and outlet occasionally for overheating; if it feels hot, turn it off. Do not use extension cords with space heaters unless absolutely necessary.

Heaters should be placed on a level, hard and fire-resistant surface. Do not place heaters on furniture since they may fall, dislodging or breaking parts in the heater, which could result in a fire or shock hazard. Unless the heater is designed for use outdoors or in

bathrooms, do not use in damp, wet areas.

Liquid-fueled heaters, such as those that use kerosene, should not be used inside the home. Visit [www.NFPA.org](http://www.NFPA.org) for more information and how to safely add fuel to liquid-fueled heaters.

The best recommendation is to use space/portable heaters carefully and follow instructions specific to your unit.

For more information, Consumer Reports has a Space Heater Guide that highlights space heater types and safety features. Specific fact sheets on Gas Space Heaters, Kerosene Space Heaters, and Electric Space Heaters are available through the Minnesota Safety Council website.

Sources: Consumer Product Safety Commission, Consumer Reports and National Fire Protection Association.

Courtesy of Minnesota Safety Council.

# Portable electric space heater safety

NOTE: Statistics reflect most current data available.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, based on 2003-2007 annual averages, space heaters, whether portable or stationary, accounted for one-third (32 percent) of home heating fires and over three-fourths (79 percent) of home heating fire deaths.

Portable electric heaters manufactured after 1991 include many new performance requirements to enhance safety. For portable electric heaters that may present a fire hazard when tipped over, a tip-over switch will turn the heater off until it is turned upright again. New heaters also include indicator lights to let users know that the heater is plugged in or is turned on. Some manufacturers have included technically innovative safety controls such as infrared or proximity sensors, which can turn a heater off when objects come too close, or when children or pets are near. These kinds of controls may prevent burn injuries to children who might play too near a heater, or reduce the risk of ignition of combustible materials that could con-

tact the heater.

- Use heaters on the floor. Never place heaters on furniture, since they may fall, dislodging or breaking parts in the heater, which could result in a fire or shock hazard.

- Unless certified for that purpose, do not use heaters in wet or moist places, such as bathrooms; corrosion or other damage to parts in the heater may lead to a fire or shock hazard.

- Do not hide cords under rugs or carpets. Placing anything on top of the cord could cause the cord to overheat, and can cause a fire.

- Do not use an extension cord unless absolutely necessary. Using a light-duty, household extension cord with high-wattage appliances can start a fire. If you must use an extension cord, it must be marked #14 or #12 A WG; this tells the thickness or gauge of the wire in the cord. (The smaller the number, the greater the thickness of the wire.) For example, a cord sold as an air conditioner extension cord will have these heavy wires. Do not use a cord marked #16 or #18 AWG. Only use extension cords bearing

the label of an independent testing laboratory such as a U.L. or E.T.L.

- Be sure the plug fits snugly in the outlet. Since a loose plug can overheat, have a qualified repairman replace the worn-out plug or outlet. Since heaters draw lots of power, the cord and plug may feel warm. If the plug feels hot, unplug the heater and have a qualified repairman check for problems. If the heater and its plug are found to be working properly, have the outlet replaced. Using a heater with a hot cord or plug could start a fire.

- If a heater is used on an outlet protected by a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) and the GFCI trips, do not assume the GFCI is broken. Because GFCIs protect the location where leakage currents can cause a severe shock, stop using the heater and have it checked, even if it seems to be working properly.

- Broken heaters should be checked and repaired by a qualified appliance service center. Do not attempt to repair, adjust or replace parts in the heater yourself.

Courtesy of Minnesota Safety Council.

# Informational Web Sites

The following is a list of Web sites that can provide information and education in reference to electrical safety and energy conservation. These Web sites are listed as links on Red Lake Electric Cooperative's Web site at [www.redlakeelectric.com](http://www.redlakeelectric.com).

- Electrical Safety Foundation International: [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org)
- Alliance to Save Energy: [www.ase.org](http://www.ase.org)
- US Environmental Protection Agency: [www.epa.gov/greenhomes](http://www.epa.gov/greenhomes)
- Energy Star: [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)
- Minnesota Safety Council: [www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org](http://www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org)
- Safe Electricity: [www.safeelectricity.org](http://www.safeelectricity.org)
- Lighting Controls Association: [www.aboutlightingcontrols.org](http://www.aboutlightingcontrols.org)
- US Consumer Product Safety Commission: [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)

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Double circuit pole is changed

Red Lake Electric Cooperative has eight substations located throughout its service territory. Each of the substations have more than one circuit or feeder leaving the substation, each going in a different direction. Each circuit supplies the electric needs for members in a specific geographic area.

The Dakota substation is situated northeast of Thief River Falls. It

has five circuits, one each going north, east, and south, and two going west.

When all of the wires, seven total, for two circuits, are attached to one common pole, the pole is called a double-circuit pole. Recently, one of the double circuit poles about half mile west of the Dakota substation were changed.



Red Lake Electric linemen make preparations to change out a double circuit pole west of the Dakota substation. Members receiving electric service from one of the circuits were without service during the change out. The other circuit was back fed, allowing members on that circuit to have service.



After all of the wires have been untied and removed from the insulators, the rotten pole is removed.



The new pole had been framed (cross arms and associated hardware attached) in advance and is set in the same hole as the old pole.



Brett Knott, left, and Troy Schmitz work to re-attach the wires to the new insulators. With this being a double circuit pole, there is a total of seven wires. There are three phase wires for each circuit and the neutral wire.



Another pole has been successfully changed in hopes that the new pole will have a life of more than 50 years.

Homeowners warned to be wary of company selling deeds

The Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota (BBB) is warning consumers not to be duped by a company that's offering homeowners copies of their property deeds for an exorbitant price – in some cases more than 40 times the price consumers would pay if they were to purchase the same copies themselves at their county offices.

The company, Deed Retrieval Department (which also does business as Deed Retrieval Services and Record Retrieval Department), has

been sending Minnesota and Wisconsin homeowners letters that appear to be a bill for \$87 from the U.S. government for a property deed. However, despite the fact that it looks official, it's not a bill nor is it from the U.S. government.

The letter says, "Why do we believe you need a copy of your current Grant Deed and Property Profile? State Record Regulation Department recommends that all U.S. homeowners obtain a copy of their current Grant Deed." At the bottom, the letter states that the

"product or service is not endorsed by any government agency." However, the BBB believes that consumers may overlook this fine print.

"In most cases, homeowners don't even need a copy of the deed to their home" said BBB President and CEO Dana Badgerow. "And if you want a copy, we advise against paying \$87 to this firm or any other when you can get one for a fraction of that price from your local County Clerk's or Register of Deed's office."

Letters from Deed Retrieval Services list an address in Champlin – which is a UPS Store. The company, operating under different names, also claims two additional addresses in Wisconsin; a Milwaukee address and a Madison address, both of which are UPS stores. It's likely that mail sent to any of these boxes is forwarded out of state.

An alert has been added to the company's BBB Business Review, informing consumers about the BBB's concerns regarding this company and their marketing tactics.

Consumers who receive questionable offers or have concerns about mailings that appear to be official or have governmental ties, are encouraged to contact the BBB at 1-800-646-6222.

The mission of the Better Business Bureau is to be the leader in building marketplace trust by promoting, through self-regulation, the highest standards of business ethics and conduct, and to instill confidence in responsible businesses through programs of education and action that inform, assist and protect the general public.

Contact the BBB at [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org) or 651-699-1111, toll-free at 1-800-646-6222.



Upon completion of the pole change-out, Brett Knott uses an insulated shotgun stick to reclose the blades on the busbar in the Dakota substation. Cooperative members that were without electric service during the pole change-out had service restored in one and a half hours.



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To have a disconnected service reconnected, all amounts owing, a \$50 reconnection fee, and a security deposit must be paid. If the service must be reconnected after normal working hours, a \$100 reconnection fee must be paid.

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STOPPED METERS

If you find your meter has stopped and you are using electricity, please contact the office immediately so we can replace it. Average consumption will be billed to the member for the time the meter was stopped so there is no advantage in not reporting a stopped meter.

METER READINGS

An automated meter reading system is utilized to obtain monthly meter readings. Although the system is normally reliable, there is always a chance that the correct reading has not been transmitted to the office for billing. Customers should periodically read their meter and compare it to the reading on the billing statement. If the actual reading is not close to the billing statement reading, please call the office.

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Mission Statement

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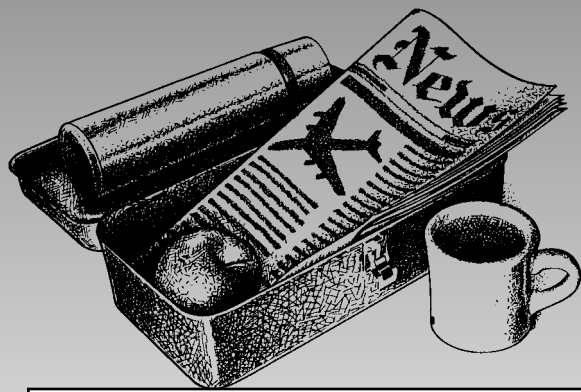
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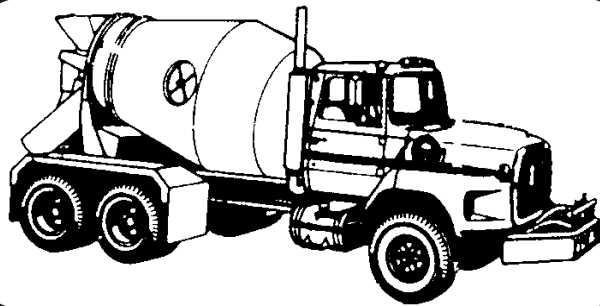
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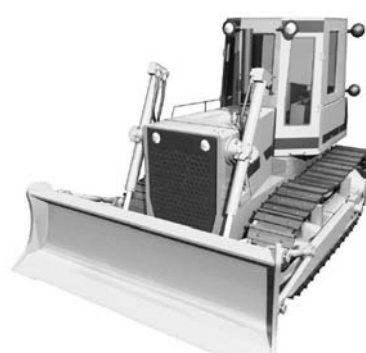
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## Employees recognized for years of service

Recently, five Red Lake Electric Cooperative employees were recognized for a combined total of 145 years of service. These employees included, from left, Alan Cota, crew foreman, 35 years; Roger Valley, crew foreman, 35 years; Mike Wavra, lead lineman, 30 years; and Steve Conely, engineering technician, 10 years. Not pictured is Kathy LaPlante, customer service representative, 35 years.

## North Dakota haze deadline extended

The United States District Court of Colorado on Jan. 10 granted the EPA an extension, from Jan. 26 to March 2, for the deadline in which it must decide whether it will take over the North Dakota Regional Haze plan regarding nitrogen oxide emissions at plants such as the Milton R. Young Station.

An earlier agreement between the EPA and the WildEarth Guardians, National Parks Conservation Association and the Environmental Defense Fund had set the Jan. 26 date. Also extended by the court were haze deadlines for Montana and Wyoming.

## Judge rules in favor of Minnkota, state for BACT

The state of North Dakota and Minnkota Power Cooperative have been in an ongoing dispute with the EPA about the Best Available Control Technology (BACT) for nitrogen oxides (NOx) at the Milton R. Young Station for several years.

But on Dec. 21, a court decision was reached about BACT.

Judge Daniel L. Hovland, of the U.S. District Court in Bismarck, ruled in favor of Minnkota and the state of North Dakota and against the EPA in a lawsuit regarding whether North Dakota was reasonable in deciding what is BACT for NOx at the Young Station.

Judge Hovland agreed with the state's finding that BACT for NOx at the Young Station is Selective Noncatalytic Reduction (SNCR).

"The state's findings and conclusions are not unreasonable, nor was its decisions arbitrary and capricious," he said.

This does not settle the Regional Haze SIP (State Implementation Plan) versus the FIP (Federal Implementation Plan) issue, but it does improve the state's position in the ongoing dispute.

"We are pleased that Judge Hovland saw things the way we do — that one size does not fit all when it comes to boilers and coal," said



Mac McLennan, Minnkota president and CEO.

In 2006, the EPA reached a Consent Decree agreement with Minnkota and Square Butte Electric Cooperative to resolve complaints by the EPA that various maintenance activities at the Young Station's two lignite-fired boilers violated the Clean Air Act's new source review program.

The Consent Decree set the responsibility on the state of North Dakota to determine BACT for a retrofit of the two boilers to control air emissions of NOx, and gave the North Dakota federal court authority to resolve disputes between the parties.

In November 2010 the state concluded that SNCR was the best technology for the boilers based on

the unique physical and chemical characteristics of a boiler combusting North Dakota lignite coal. The EPA disagreed and contended that Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) technology is needed.

The EPA's primary argument, the Judge said, was that because SCR technology has been deployed at coal-fired power plants across the country, North Dakota should have selected SCR as BACT for the Young Station.

"It is clear that Congress insisted that a state's BACT analysis be conducted on a site specific, case-by-case basis so that generalized assertions of suitability would not prevail," Judge Hovland said. "In other words, what may work well on a wall-fired boiler in Kentucky burning bituminous may not work on a cyclone-fired boiler in North Dakota which burns lignite."

The bottom line, the judge said, is that the EPA failed to prove that the state was unreasonable in determining that SCR was not an available or applicable technology.

"The record reveals that North Dakota performed its duties reasonably and with due diligence," Judge Hovland said.

The EPA may appeal this decision to the 8th Circuit.

## Energy-saving boxes – too good to be true?

By Brian Sloboda, Cooperative Research Network

Most of us think we're too smart to fall for a scam. Yet every year thousands of folks are separated from their hard-earned dollars by putting their faith and trust in another person's sales pitch.

There's no shortage of hucksters pretending to help consumers save energy. These types of scams generally center on misstatements of science or confusion over an electric utility's energy efficiency programs.

The most popular scam right now involves a device that promises to save energy without requiring you to make any changes in behavior, turn anything off, or adjust the thermostat. People who sell these "little boxes" often claim outrageous energy savings—sometimes as much as 30 percent or more—couched around legitimate utility terms like power conditioning, capacitors, and power factor.

The marketing spiel usually goes something like this: The model being sold will control alternating current power factor and reduce electric bills. It will condition your power and make appliances last longer. It uses no power and has no moving parts. It will make motors in your home run better.

Accompanying materials often caution "your utility doesn't want you to know about this device." That last part is true—because these boxes are a rip-off.

What's the reality? While electric co-ops use various components to correct power factor for commercial and industrial consumers, power factor correction is not a concern with homes.

Engineers at the University of Texas-Austin concluded that one of the units could produce no more than a 0.06 percent reduction in electric use in an average house.

The Electric Power Research Institute, a Palo Alto, Calif.-based non-profit research consortium made up of electric utilities, including electric cooperatives, recently tested one of the most popular residential power factor correction products and found that it generated average power savings of just 0.23 percent—far from the 30 percent claimed by its manufacturer. At that rate, it would take a typical homeowner more than 70 years to recoup his or her investment.

In short, these devices are nothing more than ordinary capacitors employed in electronic circuits to store energy or differentiate between high- and low-frequency signals. Companies selling these products change names quickly and often, and move from town to town looking for new victims.

There are several questions you should ask a sales representative when reading an ad for the next magical cure-all:

1. Does the product violate the laws of science? For example, does it claim to be capable of "changing of the molecular structure ... to release never-before tapped power." If true, the invention would quickly be sold in every store across nation, not marketed through fliers or a poorly designed website.

2. Was the product tested by an independent group? If the performance of the product was not tested and certified by a lab or entity not connected to the company selling it, be very skeptical.

3. Is it too good to be true? If so, it probably is. A video getting play on the Internet shows a consumer reporter for a television station testing one of these little boxes. By

looking at electric bills before and after installation, he concludes the device is a good buy. However, an excessively hot or unusually cool day can cause one month's electric bill to run significantly higher or lower than the previous month. Wise consumers always ask to see electric use for the same month

from the previous year(s), not previous month, and factor in weather anomalies for any savings claims.

Brian Sloboda is a program manager specializing in energy efficiency for the Cooperative Research Network, a service of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. The Cooperative

Research Network monitors, evaluates, and applies technologies that help electric cooperatives control costs, increase productivity, and enhance service to their consumers. Additional research provided by ESOURCE.

Source: NRECA

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