



# 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. 6

RED LAKE FALLS (RED LAKE COUNTY), MINNESOTA 56750

APRIL 2012



Milton R. Young Station

## Milton R. Young Power Plant tour scheduled for June 12 and 13

Red Lake Electric Cooperative and Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative plan to cosponsor a tour of the Milton R. Young Power Plant June 12 and 13.

The first day of the trip will include a stop at Minnkota Power Cooperative's headquarters in Grand Forks. Time will be spent at the Ashtabula Wind Energy Center near Pillsbury, N.D. A relaxing evening will be spent at the Seven Seas Motel in Mandan, which will include a banquet sponsored by Minnkota Power.

The second day of the tour includes visiting the Milton R. Young generation station near Center, N.D. It will also include a drive through the open pit lignite mines (weather permitting) to see the mining operation first hand. You are guaranteed to have a better under-

standing of the process involved with generating the electricity that serves you.

The cost to participate in the tour is \$80 per person, double (4712002.03 Stanley Skibicki, Jr.) occupancy, \$100 single occupancy. This includes transportation, meals and lodging. The tour is open to all Red Lake Electric Cooperative members and/or spouses.

The tour group will depart from Red Lake Electric Cooperative's headquarters in Red Lake Falls at 7 a.m. Tuesday, June 12. Approximate time of return is 9 p.m. Wednesday, June 13.

Registrations and payment are due by May 31.

If you have not partaken of this tour, sign up today for a learning experience.



Approximately 225 members and guests of Red Lake Electric Cooperative attended the Cooperative's 74th annual meeting. The meeting was held March 28 in the Imperial Room of the Ralph Engelstad Arena in Thief River Falls.

## Red Lake Electric Cooperative holds 74th annual meeting

The 74th annual meeting of Red Lake Electric Cooperative was held March 28 in the Imperial Room of the Ralph Engelstad Arena in Thief River Falls. Approximately 225 Cooperative members and guests were in attendance.

The meeting opened with the National Anthem sung by Jordanne Walsh of Red Lake Falls. She is a senior at Lafayette High School in Red Lake Falls. District 3 director, Colette Kujava of Newfolden gave the invocation.

In her President's report, Bonnie Christians talked about how cooperatives build (1127001.02 David J. Lokstad) a better world and spoke about the impact cooperatives make not only across our country but the world. As part of her presentation, Christians showed two short videos; one called the Electric Cooperative Story that talked about the history, structure and purpose of rural electric cooperatives and a second one titled Cooperative Enterprises Build a Better World.

Christians reported \$500,000 was paid out in capital credit retirements in 2011 and that the board had authorized the retirement of another \$500 thousand in capital credits in 2012. She also thanked the Cooperative's members who participated in the Operation

Round Up® Program.

Roger Johanneck, general manager, gave his report and discussed the impact legislation is having on the way that cooperatives/electric utilities operate (6703001.04 Tom Radniecki) today. Massive environmental plant upgrades, Renewable Energy, and Conservation Improvement Program mandates are impacting not only the way cooperatives do business but in the rates members are paying for their energy. Johanneck said that the Cooperative members will see rates stabilize the next two years and that there was a reduction in the Renewable Energy Surcharge in January.

Johanneck said the mild winter has reduced the heating energy needs significantly thru the first 3 months of 2012. Johanneck talked about the safety accomplishments and concerns of the Cooperative and showed the number of times members have had accidental contact with the distribution system over the past five years.

Johanneck concluded that the Cooperative has done a good job in managing its distribution costs and compares favorably in many financial and service measurements to cooperatives across the region, state and nation.

Shirley Bregier next gave the

2011 Financial Report and said energy sales were up from the previous year largely as a result of a colder winter to start off the year and the addition of new services during the year. The Cooperative sold 133.3 million kWh's in 2011. Revenues were \$13 million and the cost of wholesale power was \$9.7 million. Bregier said the Cooperative's margin was \$391 thousand; this is the amount that is allocated back to the members as Capital Credits.

Bregier reviewed various operating expenses, fixed expenses and items on the balance sheet. She said RLEC's cost of wholesale power comprises three-fourth of the Cooperative's cost of doing business and was the driving force in the need to a retail rate increase in 2011.

Christians next introduced General Manager, Robert "Mac" McLennan, President and CEO of Minnkota Power Cooperative. McLennan updated members on power supply issues, wind generation, upgrades at the Young generating unit that have been required by the EPA and the \$425 million that has been invested in the power plant to meet these environmental mandates.

*Continued on page 2*



### Power Plant Tour Registration

**June 12 and 13, 2012**

Sign up deadline is May 31, 2012

NAME OF PARTICIPANTS \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS(ES) \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS \_\_\_\_\_

ACCOUNT NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_

**\$80 Per Participant, Double Occupancy • \$100 Per Participant, Single Occupancy**

Return to RLEC, P.O. Box 430, Red Lake Falls, MN 56750, along with your check. RLEC will contact you later with details. Your check or deposit will be returned if the tour should be cancelled for some reason. If it becomes necessary for you to cancel out on the trip, it is required that you notify RLEC at least 48 hours before departure to be eligible for a refund. Registration for the trip is on a first-come, first-served basis with a limited number of openings. If you have previously partaken of the trip, you will be put on a space availability standby.

# Operation Round Up grants total \$9,500

The Red Lake Electric Trust board met recently and awarded 17 grants to area non-profit and community organizations that totaled \$9,500. Since its inception in 1993, 652 Operation Round Up grants totaling \$385,000 have been gifted to area community organizations. The Red Lake Electric Trust receives money for grants from the Operation Round Up program administered by the Red Lake Electric Cooperative.

Today, 91 percent of Red Lake Electric's (6213004.04 Chad Lundeen) members voluntarily "round-up" their monthly bill for the Operation Round Up program.

Follow are organizations awarded Round Up funds to help the disadvantaged:

- American Cancer Society, Red Lake County Unit: \$500 to help defray the cost of the Relay For Life.
- Inter-County Nursing: \$850 for maintenance care home health to assist with personal care for elderly.
- North Valley Public Health: \$400 to provide educational programs at Senior Citizen Centers.
- Strandquist Area Food Shelf: \$600 to assist those in need with food items.
- Goodridge Senior Citizens, Inc.: \$750 to put steel on the roof of the senior center.
- St. Hilaire Senior Citizens Club, Inc.:



educational special events for senior citizens.

- Middle River-Thief Lake Living at Home Block Nurse Program: \$500 for volunteer program that helps seniors with transportation and supplies.
- Villa St. Vincent: \$500 to help purchase a Med Ped to help people get around the campus and community.
- Occupational Development Center: \$500 to help purchase chairs to be used during meetings, lunch time, breaks, and leisure activities.
- Marshall County Literacy Council: \$200 to promote literacy in Marshall County.
- Red Lake Falls Public Library: \$500 to be used to purchase books and other library materials to enhance the Red Lake Falls permanent collection.
- Goodridge Veterans Memorial Park: \$500 to build and maintain a Veterans Memorial in the City of Goodridge.

One area emergency service provider

was given a grant:

- Plummer Fire Department: \$1,000 to help purchase a 4-wheeler to better combat wild land fires.

Area youth will benefit from an Operation Round Up grants made to the following organizations:

- Marshall County Social Services-Little Brother/Little Sister Program: \$500 to help provide ongoing support for children who need a positive adult role model in their life.
- Early Childhood Family Advocate Program-TRF: \$1,000 to work with at-risk families who have children ages 0-5 in Pennington County. The program is designed to break the cycle of child abuse.

The Red Lake Electric Trust Board of Directors determines grants two times per year, in March and September. Serving on the board are Van Swanson, president, Thief River Falls; Randy Knutson, vice-president, Newfolden; and Patty Mickelson, secretary/treasurer, Oklee; Ex-officio directors are Bonnie Christians of Crookston and Roger Johanneck of Red Lake Falls, representing Red Lake Electric Cooperative.

Grant applications are available at the Red Lake Electric Cooperative office or by visiting their web site at [www.redlakeelectric.com](http://www.redlakeelectric.com). The next deadline for Operation Round Up grant applications are due in September, 2012.

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Anita Cardinal, left, representing Inter-County Nursing, accepted an \$850 Operation Round Up check from Trust Board director Bonnie Christians. Inter-County Nursing Service brings a wide range of health care services into the homes of clients in Pennington and Red Lake Counties. The Operation Round Up grant will help Inter-County meet the nursing needs of its in-home clients.





# Manager's Comments

by Roger Johanneck

## Spring safety

I don't ever recall field work being done prior to our Cooperative's annual meeting, which is normally held the last Wednesday each March, but this spring season, so far, is different. A mild winter has transitioned to an early spring and many of you have started planting crops. Hopefully cutting corners is not part of your plan as you prepare for (3620006.01 Richard Hruby, Jr.) the field work that remains. By cutting corners, I mean not taking the time to do your work safely. Certainly favorable weather early in the season goes a long way towards easing the pace at which field work is accomplished. I remind you again to be cautious as you gear up for and plant your fields. Spring planting and Fall harvesting are the times when accidents are more likely to happen; either people getting injured or property getting damaged.

Be sure to take time for a tailgate session with those who will be helping you with your work and discuss where overhead power lines, power line poles, anchors, electrical equipment – such as pad transformers – and other hazards are located. Just a few minutes can make a big difference for you, your family, and co-workers.

Last year there were 17 acciden-

tal contacts with the Cooperative's poles, guy wires, and power lines. As the Quick-Take graph printed on the back page of this newsletter shows, 2011 was an average year in number of contacts the Cooperative has experienced over the past five years. A recap of the accidents that occurred in 2011 revealed that a half-dozen scenarios accounted for all 17 accidents; they were:

- Tractor hit guy wire
- Back-hoe hit wire
- Auger in line
- Spray plane cut wires
- Cut tree falls into power line
- Implement struck pole

Red Lake Electric Cooperative has about 40,000 power line poles and 18,000 anchors in place as part of the Cooperative's electric distribution system. Ground line transformers and junction boxes are also a part of the mix of equipment that are potential hazards when equipment is working the fields and moving about farm sites. Please be mindful of the electrical equipment as you plan your work; a little extra care can go a long way towards saving time, damages, and most importantly, injury. Seventeen contacts each year is too much; with a little care, time and planning, we can do better.

# RLEC holds 74th annual meeting

## Continued from front page

McLennan also spoke about the impact the nation's economy has had on the demand for energy and the cause and effect that low market prices have had on Minnkota Power's surplus energy sales and the revenue Minnkota Power received for these sales. McLennan said that the EPA's decision to not FIP the state of North Dakota regarding the Regional Haze issue is a win win situation for both Minnkota and the environment. Mac said that in 2014 there will be the challenge to Minnkota of adding to the cost of its operations the new 300 mile trans-

mission line that Minnkota is building from Center to Grand Forks. McLennan said that if there are no new regulations placed on Minnkota, rates should level off much like they did after Minnkota added base load generation in the early 80's. McLennan stated that the investments made will carry Minnkota and its member systems through the next two decades with power.

Three incumbent directors were re-elected at the annual meeting. They included: Stacy Blawat, Thief River Falls, District 2; Kelly Lun-

deen, Trail, District 7; Robert Finstad, Thief River Falls, District 8. Safety awards were presented to four Cooperative employees in recognition for their safe-work records which totals 125 years. Employees recognized for surpassing five-year increments of accident free work were: Bev Schmitz, 45 years; Shirley Bregier, 40 years; Mike Wavra, 30 years; Steve Cone-ly, 10 years.

Anita Cardinal of Inter-County Nursing accepted an Operation Round Up check in the amount of \$850 from Red Lake Electric Trust board director Bonnie Christians. Cardinal thanked the Cooperative members for their participation in Operation Round Up® and said the funds would be used to bring health care services into the homes of Pennington and Red Lake County clients.

Musical entertainment was provided by Vern Rogalla of Goodridge. Door prizes were awarded with Ray Molskness of Thief River Falls being recognized as a long-term member of the Cooperative. Lunch was served by members of St. John Lutheran Church of Red Lake Falls.

# From the Mail Bag

**Dear RLEC:**  
Thanks for all the years of service to the LaPlante family in Mentor.

**Michael LaPlante  
Lake Waynoka, OH**

**Dear RLEC:**  
Thank you so much for the slow cooker I won at the annual meeting.

**Harley Knutson  
Thief River Falls**

**Dear RLEC:**  
Thank you for the electric knife I won at the annual meeting

**Ginny Armstrong  
Thief River Falls**

**Dear RLEC:**  
Thank you so much for the Toastmaster Belgian waffle baker that I won at the annual meeting. It works so good and is much appreciated. Keep up the good work that you all do for your members.

**Lorraine Dallmann  
Thief River Falls**

**Dear RLEC:**  
The 74th annual meeting was very well planned. The information was good and not too lengthy. The food was good. Thanks for the door prize that I won.

**Ila Anderson  
Thief River Falls**

**Dear RLEC:**  
Thank you for the good informational annual meeting. Thanks very much for the Oster electric knife with case I won. It will be put to good use. Thanks also for the good service.

**Ted Korapatnicki  
Goodridge**

**Dear RLEC:**  
Thank you for your generous donation of milk and ice cream to the seniors at Sunview Dining Center. All donations help keep our raw food costs low and maintain our budget.

**Margaret Schindler  
Dining Manager  
Red Lake Falls**

**Dear Operation Round Up:**  
Thank you for your Operation Round Up grant for \$600 to the Strandquist Food Shelf. This grant will greatly help us feed more families in the coming year.

**Gula Stromgren, Director  
Strandquist Food Shelf**

**Dear Operation Round Up:**  
We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you for once again contributing to our American Cancer Society Relay For Life. The money will help defray costs for the event.

**American Cancer Society  
Red Lake County Unit**

**Dear RLE Trust:**  
On behalf of everyone here at the Occupational Development Center, thank you for your generous donation. Your commitment to helping individuals we serve in our surrounding communities truly makes a difference in their lives.

**Sally Hagl McGlynn  
ODC Division Coordinator**

**Dear RLE Trust:**  
We are very pleased to accept the \$500 grant from the Operation Round Up program, and thank you most sincerely for considering the library a worthy recipient of these funds. Recent deductions in overall regional library funding have caused material budgets to be diminished, so our intention remains, as indicated in our application, to use these monies to add books and other materials for circulation to the permanent collection of the Red Lake Falls branch of the Northwest Regional Library. On behalf of the patrons throughout the region and our community in particular, thank you once again for this generous grant.

**Laura Schafer DeRosier  
Librarian, Branch Manager  
Red Lake Falls**

**Dear RLE Trust:**  
Thank you so much for the recent Operation Round Up grant you awarded us, which will benefit the Little Brother/Little Sister program of Marshall County. Your gift is appreciated and will be used to help fund group events throughout the year. Our next group event will be this late spring, we are planning to meet at Florian Park for a picnic and group games. Both the children and adults have enjoyed the group events in the past, as it gives them an opportunity to interact with others. Thank you again for your generosity and for your continued support of this program.

**Stacey Urbaniak  
Marshall Co. Social Services**

**Dear Operation Round Up:**  
The Villa would like to thank all of you for your generous donation of \$500 towards are people mover project. Our goal has been met and we have ordered our people mover to be at the Villa in six to eight weeks – just in time for our first outing with our residents. We want our residents mobile and going places as if they were home – this people mover will help in our dream for them. Bless you all.

**Villa Foundation  
and Residents  
Crookston**

**Dear RLE Trust:**  
Thank you for the \$400 grant we recently received as part of your Operation Round Up funds. As stated in our application, the funds will be used to educate seniors in eastern Marshall County on prescription drug use and abuse. Again, our thanks to you for your help in making this education possible.

**Gail Larson  
North Valley Public Health  
Warren**

**Dear RLEC:**  
Thank you very much for the cap I won at the Faith Lutheran Church in Goodridge when you had the evening meeting. Thank you again.

**Clayton Stigen  
Goodridge**

## Agassiz Refuge Lost Bay Habitat Drive opens

Spring has arrived early this year – and so have many species of migratory birds, so load your family in the car and head to Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) to experience the sights and sounds that nature has to offer. Observe up to 17 species of ducks that breed on the Refuge, take a close look at a bald eagle perched in its nest incubating eggs, or listen for the "winnowing" of Wilson's snipe as they descend from the sky in courtship display. Visitors can also expect to hear the excited calls of the Franklin's gulls from their large nesting colony in Agassiz Pool or as small groups sail overhead on foraging flights, as well as the familiar honks of Canada geese, and various melodies coming from a variety of songbirds that seek out the Refuge's upland habitats. While a smorgasbord of birds is a given,

lucky Refuge visitors get a glimpse of moose, bear, or wolves. There's never a dull moment in nature.

You can experience all this activity not only as you drive towards Refuge Headquarters along Marshall Co. Highway 7, but also along the Refuge's four-mile long Lost Bay Habitat Drive, which is now open for 2012. The Habitat Drive offers interpretive signage, including three sound stations where you can listen to pre-recorded narration about the Refuge's wildlife, habitat, and management activities, by tuning your car radio to 1610AM. If you want to take in more of the fresh spring air, take a jaunt down one of the three hiking trails also available on the Refuge. Whether in your car or on foot, you won't be disappointed in the splendors of spring at Agassiz NWR.

The Refuge Headquarters is

located on Co. Highway 7, 11 miles east of Holt and 16 miles west of Grygla. Between now and mid-June, the bridge on Marshall Co. Highway 7, four miles west of the Refuge Headquarters, is being replaced. During this time, the most direct route to the Refuge from Thief River Falls is as follows: Turn north on Pennington Co. Highway 20, three miles east of Thief River Falls off of State Highway 1 (see Refuge sign). Nine miles north turn right onto Co. Road 120 (260th St. NE). Follow that road three miles north and east to 190th Ave. NE. Follow that road two miles north to Co. Highway 7 and proceed east for four miles to the Refuge Headquarters. For more information or if you have questions call 218-449-4115.

## Mission Statement

It is the mission of Red Lake Electric Cooperative to enhance the quality of life for people of our service area by consistently providing quality electric service and other valued services while holding our employees, our community and our environment in high regard.



Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.

One of the Minnkota Power Systems

## WE PROUDLY PRESENT TO YOU

### The Red Lake Electric Cooperative Customer Service Guarantee

It's short and simple! Red Lake Electric Cooperative employees will meet or exceed your expectations of friendly, courteous service and will meet any commitments they make to you. If your expectations of the service provided by our employees is not met, please contact me at the Red Lake Electric Cooperative office, 253-2168. You will receive \$5.00 for your inconvenience and our promise to serve you better in the future. Our employees' commitment to quality customer service makes this guarantee possible.



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ROGER JOHANNECK  
General Manager

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

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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.



## Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.

One of the Minnkota Power Systems

## Things you should know about your electric service

### BILLINGS AND COLLECTION

You will receive your energy bill on or near the 20th of each month.

Payment of your monthly energy bill is due on the 20th of the month. You may pay your bill in person at RLEC during office hours, use the 24-hour drive-up drop box located next to the RLEC office, by Auto Pay, or by mail. Payment must be in the office, drop box, Auto Pay, or in the mail, as evidenced by the postmark, by the 5th day of the following month to avoid a late payment charge. A 1 1/2% monthly late payment charge will be computed on delinquent energy bills, the minimum late payment charge will be \$1.00.

If your payment is not received by the 15th of the month, a final notice of disconnection statement will be included on your following bill. The final notice statement will notify you when your electric service will be disconnected if the delinquent amount remains unpaid. If an employee is sent to disconnect your electric service, a \$50 collection fee will be charged to your account, even if you pay the collector.

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.

### BAD CHECKS

A \$15 charge will be levied each time a check is returned because of nonsufficient funds, account being closed or payment stopped.

### OUTAGES

In case your electricity goes out, please do the following:

1. Check your fuses or breakers at the yard pole or meter pedestal.
2. Call your neighbor to see if they are out of electricity also.
3. Call the RLEC office (218-253-2168 or 1-800-245-6068) during working hours or 218-253-2200 after hours. We will accept collect calls for outages only.

### METER TESTS

RLEC has a schedule in place to have its meters periodically tested for accuracy. Results from these tests show that meters generally slow down with age; however, if you think that your meter is recording too much usage, RLEC will test it for accuracy. You must pay a test fee in advance of the test. If the meter test shows that the meter was inaccurate, the test fee will be refunded to you.

### 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.

### GENERAL SERVICE RATES

Facilities charge variable \$27 to \$35 month  
April-December .....9.5¢ Kwh  
January-March .....9.9¢ Kwh  
Multiphase users add \$22/month cost of service charge.

Standby, \$12/month (meter disconnected but the power line retained; standby is not available on services larger than 15 KVA transformer capacity).

Security light: high pressure sodium, \$8/month; mercury vapor, \$9/month; water heater flat credit, \$7/month (January-April billing); off-peak equipment charge, \$5.50/month per heat meter; off-peak energy rate: 5.5¢/kWh long-term control, 7.5¢/kWh short-term control.



Recipe corner

Blueberry Banana Bread

2 c. whole wheat flour  
1 c. white flour  
1-1/3 c. sugar  
4 tsp. baking powder  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1-1/2 c. quick cooking rolled oats  
2/3 c. oil  
4 eggs, slightly beaten  
2 c. mashed bananas (4 whole)  
2 c. fresh or frozen blueberries  
Mix together flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Stir in oats. Add oil, eggs, bananas and blueberries, stirring just until mixed. Pour batter into two oiled 8-1/2 by 4-1/2 loaf pans. Bake at 350 degrees for approximately 60 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Let bread cool in pans for 10 minutes, then remove to cool on wire racks. Wrap and refrigerate for several hours before slicing. Yield: 2 loaves.

Rhubarb Muffins

1-1/2 c. sugar  
2/3 c. oil  
1 egg  
1 c. buttermilk  
2-1/2 c. flour  
1 tsp. salt  
1 tsp. soda  
1 tsp. vanilla  
1/2 tsp. cinnamon  
1-1/2 c. rhubarb  
Topping:  
1/2 c. sugar  
1 tsp. cinnamon  
1 Tbsp. butter  
Mix sugar, oil and buttermilk. Add dry ingredients and vanilla. Fold in rhubarb. Put in muffin pans. Mix topping ingredients and sprinkle over top of muffins. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 to 25 minutes.

Apple Crunch Muffins

1-1/2 c. unbleached flour, sifted  
1/2 c. sugar  
2 tsp. baking powder  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1-1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon  
1/4 c. vegetable shortening  
1 large egg; slightly beaten  
1/2 c. milk  
1 c. tart apples, peeled, cored and grated  
Nut Crunch Topping:  
1/4 c. brown sugar  
1/4 c. pecans, chopped  
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon  
Sift together flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and cinnamon into mixing bowl. Cut in shortening with pastry blender until fine crumbs form. Combine egg and milk. Add to dry ingredients all at once, stirring just enough to moisten. Stir in apples. Spoon batter into paper-lined 2-1/2-inch muffin-pan cups, filling 2/3rds full. Sprinkle with nut crunch topping. Bake in 375-degree oven for 25 minutes or until golden brown. Serve hot with butter and homemade jelly or jam. Yield: 8 muffins.  
Nut Crunch Topping: Mix together brown sugar (packed), chopped pecans and ground cinnamon in a small bowl.

Rhubarb Streusel Cake

1 egg, beaten  
1 c. sugar  
1/4 c. butter  
1 c. buttermilk  
2 c. flour  
1/2 tsp. baking soda  
1/4 tsp. salt  
2 c. rhubarb, chopped  
Topping:  
1/3 c. sugar  
2 Tbsp. butter, melted  
2 Tbsp. flour  
Vanilla Sauce:  
1/2 c. sugar  
1/2 c. evaporated milk  
1/2 c. butter  
2 tsp. vanilla  
Combine egg, sugar and butter. Stir in buttermilk. Combine flour, baking powder, soda and salt; add to buttermilk mixture, stirring just till combined. Fold in rhubarb. Spread in a 9-inch by 9-inch by 2-inch square pan. Topping: Combine sugar, flour and butter; sprinkle over batter. Bake in a 350-degree oven about 45 minutes. Cool in pan.  
Sauce: Combine sugar, butter and evaporated milk. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Boil gently 8 to 10 minutes; stir occasionally. Stir in vanilla. Cool to room temperature. Stir; drizzle over cake.

Baked French Toast with Cinnamon Syrup

Texas toast bread  
2 eggs  
1/2 c. milk  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1 tsp. vanilla  
1 Tbsp. sugar  
Corn flakes, finely crushed  
Syrup:  
1-1/3 c. brown sugar  
2/3 c. granulated sugar  
1/3 c. water  
1/2 to 1 tsp. cinnamon (depending on taste)  
1 small can carnation milk  
2 Tbsp. butter  
1/2 tsp. almond extract  
Combine eggs, milk, salt, vanilla and sugar. Dip bread in mixture. Roll in corn flakes. Put on cookie sheet and bake in 450-degree oven for 10 minutes.  
Combine brown sugar, granulated sugar, water and cinnamon; boil for two minutes. Remove from heat and add carnation milk, butter and almond extract. Serve over toast. Syrup can be made ahead, it keeps well in the refrigerator; warm it before serving.  
Yield: 4 servings.

Best Buns

1 qt. milk  
2 pkg. yeast  
1 tsp. sugar  
1/4 c. warm water  
3 eggs, beaten  
4 tsp. salt  
1 c. sugar  
1 c. oil  
11 c. flour  
Boil milk; cool until lukewarm. Dissolve yeast and sugar in warm water. Use a 1 quart bowl. Allow yeast mix to rise to full capacity without stirring, about 15 to 20 minutes. Pour milk into a large bowl and add eggs, salt, dissolved yeast, sugar and oil. Add flour. Knead for 10 minutes. Let rise until double in size. Do not punch down. Form into buns and place on greased pans. Let rise two hours or so. Bake at 375 degrees for 12 to 15 minutes. Brush tops of buns with butter.

Top dairy herds for March DHIA

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

Name	Cows	% in milk	lbs. milk	test	lbs. fat	lbs. protein	lbs. protein
Northstar Dairy LLC 3X	1098	93	78	3.6	2.8	3.2	2.5
Wayra Dairy 3X	292	92	74	3.7	2.7	3.0	2.2
Robert and Terri Dahlen	54	89	70	3.2	2.2	3.0	2.1
Spring Prairie Colony	385	86	69	4.0	2.8	3.1	2.1
Walter Bros Farm	364	88	65	3.7	2.4	3.0	2.0
Kara Kesh Holsteins	9	100	64	4.2	2.7	3.2	2.1
Beyer Brothers Farm	69	96	63	3.7	2.3	3.2	2.0
Amundson Dairy	68	88	63	4.0	2.5	3.1	1.9
BLY Dairy Inc	264	89	56	4.1	2.3	3.2	1.8
Mark Gladen	85	88	55	3.4	1.9	2.9	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.

Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
Operating Report  
MONTHLY COMPARISON

	FEBRUARY 2011	FEBRUARY 2012
Total Revenue	\$ 1,409,605	\$ 1,492,305
Total Margins	\$ 269,975	\$ 206,328
Cost of Power	\$ 876,419	\$ 1,014,972
KWH's Purchased	17,423,803	15,375,890
Capital Credits Paid to Estates	7,431	16,602

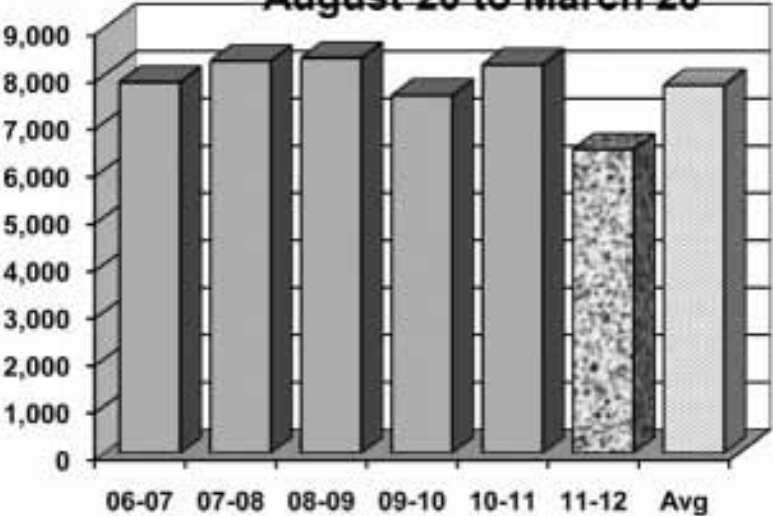
YEAR TO DATE COMPARISON

	FEBRUARY 2011	FEBRUARY 2012
Total Revenue	\$ 2,794,764	\$ 2,907,867
Total Margins	\$ 493,777	\$ 345,658
Cost of Power	\$ 1,773,275	\$ 2,005,382
KWH's Purchased	35,436,929	30,784,148
New Service Connections	2	1
Customers Served	5,192	5,216
Capital Credits Paid to Estates	12,773	17,219
Miles of Line		
Overhead	2,324	2,324
Underground	239	245

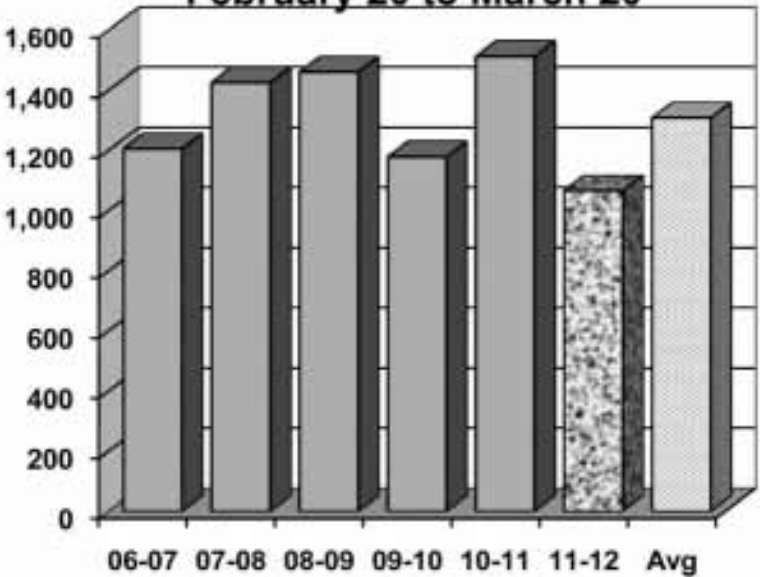
DEGREE DAYS

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 March 20



DEGREE DAYS  
February 20 to March 20



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Orville and Fran Skadsem, Thief River Falls, were two of the approximately 225 members and guests who attended Red Lake Electric Cooperative's 74th annual meeting.



Chester Camp and his grandson Tommy, both of Thief River Falls, were two of many attendees at Red Lake Electric Cooperative's annual meeting.



Harley Knutson, Thief River Falls, visits with Red Lake Electric Cooperative employee Kathy LaPlante as he registers for the Cooperative's annual meeting in the Ralph Engelstad Arena.



One of several door prizes at Red Lake Electric Cooperative's annual meeting was a Skil jigsaw won by Einar Kvasagar of Oklee.



Ruth Mosbeck of Red Lake Falls won a Dremel cut-out tool at Red Lake Electric Cooperative's annual meeting held March 28.



Red Lake Electric Cooperative annual meeting attendees pickup their lunch following the Cooperative's business meeting. The lunch was served by members of St. John's Lutheran Church of Red Lake Falls.



Ardis and Loren Race, Goodridge, register for Red Lake Electric Cooperative's 74th annual meeting as they enter the Ralph Engelstad Arena in Thief River Falls.



Red Lake Electric Cooperative's annual meeting attendees enjoyed coffee, juice and donuts prior to the call of the business meeting.



Jordanne Walsh, a senior at Lafayette High School in Red Lake Falls, sang the national anthem following the call to order at Red Lake Electric Cooperative's annual meeting March 28.



Winner of the Meco electric grill at Red Lake Electric Cooperative's 74th annual meeting was Arlen Koskela of Trail.



Long-term member Ray Moiskness of Thief River Falls was presented a Milwaukee radio at Red Lake Electric Cooperative's annual meeting.

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Annual meetings are always an opportunity for friends and neighbors to "catch up on the latest." This was true at Red Lake Electric Cooperative's annual meeting as attendees visit in the Imperial Room of the Ralph Engelstad Arena.



Dian Johnson, Thief River Falls, visits with Red Lake Electric Cooperative employee Mike Wavra in the Ralph Engelstad Arena prior to the Cooperative's annual meeting.



Musical entertainment was provided by Vern Rogalla of Goodridge at Red Lake Electric Cooperative's annual meeting. The meeting was held March 28 in the Imperial Room of the Ralph Engelstad Arena in Thief River Falls.



Gerda Koskela, Plummer, was the lucky winner of a George Foreman grill at Red Lake Electric Cooperative's annual meeting.



Attendees of Red Lake Electric Cooperative's annual meeting enjoy the noon lunch that followed the meeting.



Planting the right tree in the right place

Tips for refinancing

Many people plant trees during the spring, especially around National Arbor Day (April 27) and Earth Day (April 22). There are many environmental and beautification benefits to planting young trees. However, Safe Electricity wants to remind everyone to be aware of electrical hazards while planting this year. Always seek help from professionals when choosing and placing trees and bushes.

Trees that grow too close to electric lines can create shock and fire hazards as well as power outages. More importantly, children can become victims of electric shock when they climb trees that have grown too close to the power lines as well. Trees growing into power lines can also create electrical hazards for people who might be trimming branches, hanging lights or otherwise working around them.

"Trees provide many aesthetic, environmental and economic benefits" said Safe Electricity Executive

Director Molly Hall. "But everyone needs to be aware of the dangers and risks created when trees grow into power lines, and the importance of calling the utility or utility locator service before beginning any landscaping project."

Take the time to research tree selections by consulting your local arborist, tree nursery or utility. These experts can provide assistance in designing a beautiful, shade-filled yard with trees appropriate for each area of the landscape. With their help, trees can provide economical cooling in the summer, and a wind-break for harsh winter winds.

In addition, trees help combat the effects of pollution by absorbing carbon dioxide (CO2). When trees grow, they take energy from the sun and combine it with CO2 from the air to photosynthesize. This makes trees a natural "carbon sink" or, a living source of carbon reduction. Some trees are better suited for this task than others and, according to the U.S. Department

of Energy (DOE), tree species that grow quickly and live long are ideal carbon sinks.

Choosing the right tree for the right place is crucial, especially when it comes to power lines. Trees and wood in general can potentially conduct electricity and can create a safety hazard if grown close to electric lines. Power outages or momentary interruptions can occur when branches come into contact with overhead lines. Electrical arcing and sparking from a wire to a nearby branch can also cause fires.

"Keep in mind expected height when you purchase trees to plant this year," Hall said. "Just because a tree is far from the power line right now, doesn't mean it always will be."

If you have trees that appear to be growing into power lines, contact your electric utility. Never try to prune them yourself. Utilities have or can recommend skilled professionals trained to safely prune and trim trees for electric line clearance.

To avoid future electrical hazards, safe planting tips to remember include:

- Consider mature height of trees. Never plant a tree near a power line that could grow within 25 feet of it. Tall growing trees should be planted a minimum of 20 feet away from power lines, and 50 feet away to avoid future pruning. A mature height of less than 15 feet is recommended for trees planted near power lines.
- Do not plant near underground utility services. Tree roots can grow to interfere with underground pipes, cables and wires.

Future repairs to these facilities also could damage the health and beauty of nearby plants and trees, or even require removal.

- Keep areas around electric meters, transformers or other electrical equipment free of any vegetation that could limit utility service access.
- Before digging, call the local underground utility locator service to mark the location of underground utilities so that accidental contact, damage and injuries can be avoided.

"There are many beautiful varieties of low-growing trees and shrubs that provide color, screening and shade, and enhance the quality of life in our communities and environment," said Hall. "Consider the types of trees that co-exist well with power lines and the environment to avoid the need for trimming for line clearance."

*Source: Safe Electricity, Energy Education Council*

**By Doreen Friel**

If you own your home and are paying a mortgage, one way you may be able to save money is through refinancing—particularly if you closed on your home many years ago. Only you can decide whether refinancing is a smart move, but here are some things to consider:

- Refinancing will cost you money. There's no way around this. You're either going to be charged closing costs to refinance, or you may be offered a "no-closing cost" deal. But don't be fooled. One way or another, you will pay for it, since no-cost transactions usually mean you'll be charged a higher interest rate (than if you had paid your closing costs out of pocket).
- How long do you expect to stay in your current home? If you're thinking about moving within the next two years or so, the costs involved may not justify refinancing.
- Think carefully before "cashing out." It's a popular move for people who refinance to take cash

out of their home when they refinance. But your home is not an ATM—that money will have to be repaid sooner or later. And if home prices drop after you refinance, you could find yourself owing more on your mortgage than your house is worth.

- Check with your current lender before you commit to any refinancing deal. Chances are, you may be able to save yourself quite a bit of money on closing costs, while taking advantage of a lower interest rate.

"Calculate" your move carefully!

There are no hard and fast rules when it comes to refinancing. But a refinancing calculator, such as one at Bankrate.com, can help you decide whether or not refinancing makes "cents."

Your home is one of your greatest assets. So be sure to consider any home-related financing decisions carefully.

*Source: NRECA's Straight Talk Alert*

When shopping for lights – look for lumens, not watts

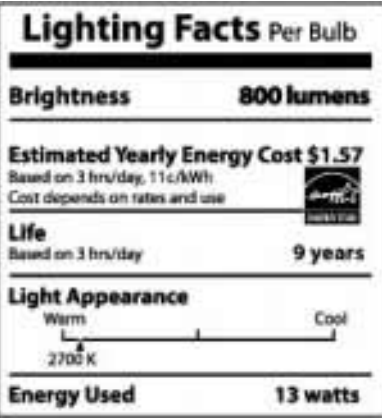
When you're shopping for light bulbs, compare lumens to be sure you're getting the amount of light, or level of brightness, you want. The Lighting Facts Label will help. This new label will make it easy to compare bulb brightness, color, life, and estimated operating cost for the year.

energy-saving bulb that gives you about 800 lumens

- Replace a 40W bulb with an energy-saving bulb that gives you about 450 lumens.

**What Should I Look for on the Package? The Lighting Facts Label**

To help consumers better under-



**Buy Lumens, Not Watts**

We typically buy things based on how much of it we get, right? When buying milk, we buy it by volume (gallons). So, why should light be any different? For decades, we have been buying light bulbs based on how much energy they consume (Watts) — no matter how much light they give us (Lumens).

**What's a Lumen?**

Lumens measure how much light you are getting from a bulb. More lumens means it's a brighter light; fewer lumens means it's a dimmer light.

Lumens let you buy the amount of light you want. So when buying your new bulbs, think lumens, not watts.

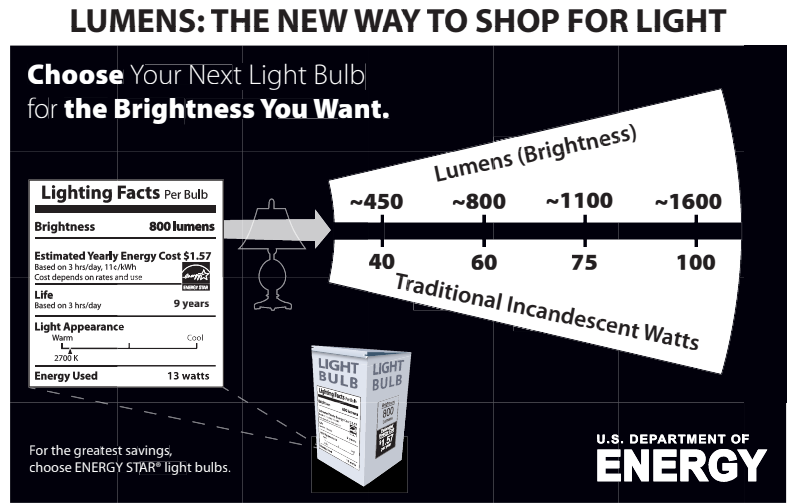
The brightness, or lumen levels, of the lights in your home may vary widely, so here's a rule of thumb:

- To replace a 100-watt incandescent bulb, look for a bulb that gives you about 1600 lumens. If you want something dimmer, go for less lumens; if you prefer brighter light, look for more lumens.
- Replace a 75W bulb with an energy-saving bulb that gives you about 1100 lumens
- Replace a 60W bulb with an

stand the switch from watts to lumens, the Federal Trade Commission requires a new product label for light bulbs. It helps people buy the light bulbs that are right for them.

Like the helpful nutrition label on food products, the Lighting Facts label helps consumers understand what they are really purchasing. The label clearly provides the lumens—or brightness—of the bulb, the estimated operating cost for the year, and the color of the light (from warm/yellowish, to white to cool/blue).

*Source: Energy Savers*



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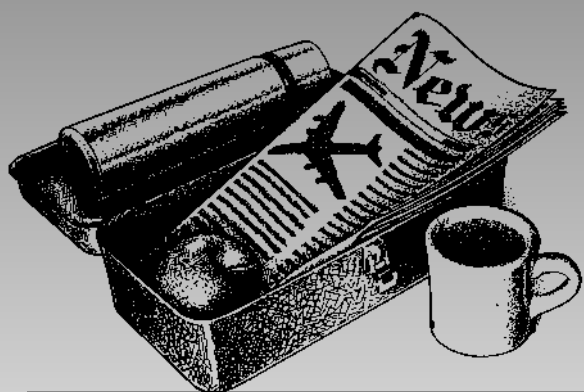
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550 EFI 4x4 Auto	<del>SOLD</del>	\$6,299
650 4x4 Auto	\$5,699	
450 EFI 4x4 Auto - 2 Rider	\$6,399	
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**New 2011 ATVs w/Power Steering**

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Office 218-253-2497

COMMERCIAL TRENCHING RESIDENTIAL FARM

Red Lake Electric Cooperative

**Want Ad Order Form**

Use this handy form to submit your want ads.  
**PLEASE PRINT.**

Mail or bring your ads to the RLEC office by the tenth of the month. Commercial ads are 10¢ per word with a minimum charge of \$4 per insertion.

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Member want ads are FREE. One want ad per member per month.

Please **PRINT . . .**

Your Name, Address and Phone Number. Mail with your power bill payment, if you prefer, or fax to 218-253-2630.





Employees represent 125 years of safe work

Four Red Lake Electric Cooperative employees were recognized at the Cooperative's annual meeting for their years of safe work. Combined the employees have 125 years. Included from left are Bev Schmitz, administrative assistant, 45 years; Shirley Bregier, accountant, 40 years; Mike Wavra, crew foreman, 30 years; and Steve Conely, engineering tech, 10 years.

Cooperatives: It's a matter of principle

You might be surprised by the number of co-ops around you. Co-ops have been formed to sell produce and electricity, offer financial and banking services, provide housing and health care, and much more.

So where did the bright idea for co-ops come from?

It's a matter of principles (seven, to be exact). Last month we looked at the co-op principles. But where did they come from?

The modern movement traces its roots to a store started by weavers in the town of Rochdale (pronounced Rotch-dale) in northern England in 1844. The group was guided by a set of principles drawn up by one of its members, Charles Howarth. When introduced into the U.S. by the National Grange in 1874, these "Rochdale Principles"

fueled a cooperative explosion.

Although stated in many ways, the Rochdale Principles require that a cooperative must be open for anyone to join. Every member retains one voice, one vote. Electric co-ops hold member business meetings annually, allowing members to elect fellow consumers to guide the co-op and have a say in how their utility is run.

There also have to be real member benefits. For example, members of electric co-ops often get money back (called capital credits) when the co-op's in good financial shape. Red Lake Electric Cooperative returned \$413,000 last month.

Education remains another big focus. Electric co-ops provide safety information in schools, share ideas on how to make your home more energy efficient to keep elec-

tric bills affordable, and make sure elected officials and opinion leaders know about the co-op business model. Because there is strength in numbers, co-ops tend to stick together when tackling regional and national issues.

Perhaps most important of all, co-ops are independent and community-focused, not tied to the purse strings of far-flung investors.

Co-ops help drive local economic development, fund scholarships, support local charities, and work to make life better in the areas they serve—the heart of the cooperative difference.

Learn more about cooperatives and the principles that define them at [www.go.coop](http://www.go.coop).

You can be proud you are a member/owner of a local cooperative.

Be aware of hidden dangers before you put a shovel in the ground

April is National Safe Digging Month

"I said, 'O my gosh Tom, you've just killed yourself,' and I knew that I had made a grievous error and I was going to pay the consequences," explains Tom Dickey, an experienced contractor from Auburn, IL, who suffered life-changing burns and injuries when he came into contact with underground power lines.

One day at the end of a horizontal directional drilling project in 2002, a small job was added to the day's work—after Tom's safety gear had already been sent back to the shop. He took a chance and made a decision in favor of time and efficiency instead of safety to go ahead and dig a 40-foot section for conduit.

This decision almost cost him his life. As an experienced professional he knew all of the correct procedures, but while making an adjustment to the conduit's entry point in the ground by hand, he made a small slip and received a high-voltage shock. He survived, but he was badly burned. He spent months in the hospital, endured numerous surgeries, and still lives with pain every day.

Tom teamed up with the Energy Education Council's Safe Electricity® program for the 2012 chapter of the "Teach Learn Care TLC" campaign to share the message,



Tom Dickey

"Please, safety first," to help keep others from having accidents with underground utilities. Tom's story can be seen at [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

April is Safe Digging Month across the United States and an opportune time to increase awareness about the importance of con-

tacting 8-1-1 before digging into any outdoor projects this spring. There are many types of underground services, including electrical, natural gas, water, septic or sewer, telephone, cable, not to mention large transmission pipelines for gas, oil, propane and more. The goal is to reduce the risk of striking underground utility lines and potentially causing environmental or property damage, costly delays, or personal injury. It is a free call and service.

"People have got to understand that when you deal with electricity and you do silly things, it changes your life," cautions Tom. "It changes the people's lives around you."

"We commend Tom and his family for their willingness to help prevent other tragic accidents with underground utilities by sharing the lessons learned from their difficult experience," says Molly Hall, executive director of the Safe Electricity program.

"We encourage everyone to see the video of Tom's story at [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org) and to learn all of the vital information one must know at [call811.com](http://call811.com) before putting even a shovel in the ground."

*Source: Safe Electricity, Energy Education Council*

**QUICK TAKES**

A look at some statistics from your Red Lake Electric Cooperative

The Chart below indicates the number of times a car, truck, tractor, combine implement, airplane, auger and tree made contact with Red Lake Electric Cooperative's poles, guy wires and powerlines during the past five years. Spring planting and Fall harvesting are times when these accidental contacts most commonly occur. Take time now to reacquaint yourself, your employees and your family with the electrical equipment you will be working around. As the chart indicates below; we can do better to avoid vehicle and equipment contacts with poles, guy wires and powerlines.

**Vehicle & Equipment Contacts**

Year	Accidental Contacts: Poles, Guy Wires & Powerlines
2007	22
2008	15
2009	17
2010	10
2011	17

**AUTO PAY OFFERED BY RLEC**

Red Lake Electric Cooperative is pleased to offer you Auto Pay. Now you can have your monthly energy bill paid automatically from your checking or savings account. You can receive the Auto Pay service by completing the Auto Pay sign-up sheet and returning it to Red Lake Electric Cooperative.

The Auto Pay service is free of charge. Not only is this service free, you will eliminate the expense of writing a check, postage to mail your payment and no more late payment penalties because your bill will be paid on time, every month, for you.

Your payment will be automatically made for you on the 5th of each month. If the 5th falls on a week-end or holiday, the payment will be made on the next business day. You will continue to receive your monthly energy bill as you have in the past, indicating the amount that will be withdrawn from your bank account. The proof of your payment will appear on your bank statement and your next month's energy bill statement.

**Continue to pay your monthly bill until you are notified on your bill that the Auto Pay has been set up for you.**

If you have any questions about the Auto Pay please call RLEC at 800-245-6068 or 218-253-2168.

**AUTO PAY**

SIGN-UP SHEET

I authorize Red Lake Electric Cooperative (RLEC) and the bank listed below to initiate variable entries to my checking or savings account. This authorization remains in effect until I notify RLEC in writing to cancel it in such time as to allow RLEC to act on it.

RLEC ELECTRIC ACCOUNT # \_\_\_\_\_

NAME (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE # \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTION \_\_\_\_\_

CHECKING ACCOUNT # \_\_\_\_\_

SAVINGS ACCOUNT # \_\_\_\_\_

SIGN HERE TO AUTHORIZE \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this authorization form with a blank, voided check to:  
Red Lake Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 430, Red Lake Falls, MN 56750

**CHICK DAY**

**Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup>**

Open 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

- \* Baby chicks
- \* Door prizes
- \* Poultry feed and supplies
- \* Free coffee and treats
- \* All purchases of chicks or feed are eligible for a drawing for a \$50 gift certificate
- \* Huge savings on overstock feeds and mineral blocks including Omolene, Manna Pro horse blocks, Fly-B-Gone Mineral block and much more!
- \* Antler Deer Blocks regularly \$9.50 – Saturday only buy 3, get 1 FREE

**McIntosh Country Store**

218-563-3636

**Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

*One of the Minnkota Power Systems*

Phone	218-253-2168
Toll-free	1-800-245-6068
Fax	218-253-2630
After-hour outage	218-253-2200
Office hours	Monday-Friday, 8:00-4:30
E-mail:	<a href="mailto:redlake@minnkota.com">redlake@minnkota.com</a>
Web site	<a href="http://www.redlakeelectric.com">www.redlakeelectric.com</a>

**Call Before You Dig - Gopher State One Call • 1-800-252-1166**

P. O. Box 430 • 412 International Drive SW • Red Lake Falls, MN 56750-0430