



Farming is a dangerous job. One of the hazards faced by farm workers is contact with electrical equipment. Safe Electricity encourages farmers to keep safety top of mind this planting season. By doing some planning and following safety procedures, the risk of having an accident involving electricity can be greatly reduced.

One critical part of safety around electricity is awareness. It's important to remember that farm machinery is vulnerable to hitting power lines because of its large size, height and extensions. Being aware of the location of overhead power lines and planning a safe equipment route can help reduce accidents.

In equipment with auto-guidance systems (GPS), less focus is needed on steering, which may lead some drivers to think that they do not need to be as aware of navigation issues. However, even while using a GPS with automatic steering, farm workers need to keep safety in mind and stay focused on their surroundings.

Putting safety first requires alertness, focus, knowledge of potential hazards and appropriate safety steps. Varying pass-to-pass accuracy levels and potential issues, such as power poles not being correctly plotted in the system, reinforce the need for drivers to stay focused on the location of the tractor and its equipment while in the field and to be ready to take action themselves if necessary.

Regardless of what technology is used on the farm, keep the following electrical safety guidelines in mind:

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near lines. A driver's vantage point from the cab may not be sufficient.
- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from lines—at all times, in all directions.
- Look up and use care when raising any equipment such as ladders, front-end loaders or augers.
- Inspect the height of the farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Always remember to lower extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads.

- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, contact the utility.

If equipment does make contact with a power line, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 911, warn others to stay away and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.

The only reason to exit equipment that has come into contact with overhead lines is if the equipment is on fire, which is very rare. However, if this is the case, jump off the equipment with feet together and without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Still keeping feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area. When equipment has made (27697 Kent M. Bergerson) contact with a power line, it is critical to know what to do. Not knowing the proper procedures can result in serious injury or even death.

For more information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Published 10 times a year, January through May, July and September through December, by the Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc., in the interest of its members and others. Periodical postage paid at the U.S. Post Office in Red Lake Falls, Minnesota 56750. POSTMASTER, SEND ADDRESS CHANGES to Volts & Jolts, c/o Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 430, Red Lake Falls, Minnesota 56750-0430. Email: info@redlakeelectric.com.

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MINNESOTA STATE ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS

Northwest corner of Polk, western Marshall
and Red Lake Counties:

Wayne Bergstrom – 701-520-9771

Pennington and eastern Marshall Counties:

Bryan Holmes – 218-686-1413

Most of Polk County:

George Stage – 701-306-3511

Any time you or an electrician does wiring or other electrical work at your home or farm, Minnesota state law requires a state wiring inspector to conduct a proper inspection of the work. A rough-in inspection must be made before any wiring is covered. A final inspection is also required. Please visit www.dli.mn.gov for more information. The inspectors can be reached week-day mornings between 7:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

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



Manager's Comments

by Stephanie Johnson



Annual meeting

Red Lake Electric's annual meeting was held the morning of April 3rd. A thank you to all cooperative members and guests who were able to attend. A huge thank you to Red Lake Electric's dedicated staff and employees who worked diligently to bring the annual meeting together and make it a success.

I also want to express my gratitude to Red Barn Carting for the wonderful meal; Cathy Erickson and Mary Jo Sturman for the musical entertainment; Kaydon Kenfield who sang the national anthem; director Cecil Anderson for giving the invocation; guest speaker Thomas Goeltz for his moving presentation on distracted driving; RLEC member Julie Stennes for making the Operation Round Up presentation on behalf of the RLE Trust board; and the Thief River Falls area food shelf executive director Alicia Hunt for her informative message on how the food shelf (24696 Dennis L. Johnson) will use the Operation Round Up funds they were awarded.

We also appreciate the thoughtful notes and cards of thanks you send us regarding the meeting and other Cooperative business. When you tell us what you like or what you would like to see changed, it is helpful for our planning process for future annual meetings.

New billing system

We have fully converted our billing system to NISC (National Information Solutions Cooperative). You should have received your first bill in the new bill format. Please be patient through this transition and know our employees have been training and working hard to make this transition as smooth as possible and are ready to answer your questions.

Seasonal employees join RLEC



Sam Olson



Austin Rivera



Logan Klipping

Sam Olson of Bejou, Austin Rivera of Newfolden and Logan Klipping of Red Lake Falls were hired as seasonal employees at Red Lake Electric Cooperative.

Olson and Rivera recently graduated from linemen school and will be assisting the construction linemen crew. Klipping will be assisting with maintenance of the grounds. He will be a senior at Lafayette High School in the fall.



Member Service Department

by Kelli Brateng

Tips for maintaining an efficient HVAC system

Ah, summer. Cookouts, swimming pools, camping – it's the perfect time to enjoy the outdoors with family and friends. When it's time to come back indoors, there's nothing better than that cool blast you feel from your home's air conditioning unit.

Your heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC) system is essential to keeping your home comfortable during summer months, and if it breaks down, it's also the most expensive equipment to repair or replace. Luckily, there are simple steps you can take to lengthen the life of your HVAC system.

- **Change or clean filters.** Dirty filters block airflow, which can greatly decrease the efficiency of your system. It is recommended to change or clean filters every month or two. If your unit is in constant use or is subjected to dusty conditions or pet hair, consider checking filters more frequently.
- **Clean the HVAC unit.** Outdoor condenser coils can become clogged with pollen, dirt and small debris. Use a hose to spray the HVAC unit once each season to ensure maximum airflow. (Warning: Do not use a pressure washer to do this, as it can damage the equipment.)
- **Clear space around the HVAC unit.** Dryer vents, falling leaves and grass left behind from the lawnmower can create buildup. Remove any debris around the HVAC unit. If you have foliage near the unit, trim it back at least 2 feet around the condenser to increase airflow.

If you want to evaluate the efficiency of your HVAC system, try this quick test. Follow the steps in the graphic shown below.

You should also have your HVAC system periodically inspected by a licensed professional. The frequency of inspections depends on the age of your unit; we suggest scheduling tune-ups during the spring and fall, when contractors aren't as busy.

When HVAC equipment fails, it's inconvenient and uncomfortable – especially during the dog days (23696 Brian J. Schindler) of summer. Remember, your HVAC system runs best when it's regularly cleaned and serviced. With a little maintenance along the way, you can add years to your system's lifespan.

3-Step HVAC Test

As summer temperatures rise, so do electric bills. Follow these steps to test the efficiency of your HVAC unit.

The outdoor temperature should be above 80 degrees, and you should set your thermostat well below the room temperature to ensure the system runs long enough for this test.

1. Using a digital probe thermometer (about \$12), measure the temperature of the air being pulled into your HVAC filter.
2. Measure the temperature of the air blowing out of your A/C vent.
3. Subtract the A/C vent temperature from the HVAC filter temperature. You should see a difference of about 17 to 20 degrees. If the difference is less than 17 degrees, you may need a licensed technician to check the coolant. If the difference is greater than 20 degrees, your ductwork may need to be inspected for airflow restrictions.



Recipe Corner



Submit your recipes to be published in *Volts & Jolts*. Email to info@redlakeelectric.com or mail to: Red Lake Electric Cooperative, PO Box 430, Red Lake Falls, MN 56750.

Frosted Grapes

- 1 package (8 ounces) 1/3 less fat cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup (8 ounces) light sour cream
- 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons sugar splenda blend
- 2 tablespoons vanilla extract
- 2 pounds seedless red grapes
- 2 pounds seedless green grapes
- 2 cups fat free Cool Whip
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar to garnish (optional)
- 3 tablespoons chopped pecans to garnish (optional)

In a large bowl, beat the cream cheese, sour cream, cool whip, sugar and vanilla until blended. Add grapes and toss to coat.

Transfer to a serving bowl. Cover and refrigerate until serving. Sprinkle with brown (22716 Paul Waswick) sugar and pecans just before serving.

AMI update

Red Lake Electric Cooperative (RLEC) is deploying a new Automated Metering Information (AMI) system across its service territory. RLEC employees will visit the member's properties to upgrade their meters.

If your residence has an off-peak meter and you are not home at the time of the meter upgrade, your main meter will be upgraded, and a door hanger will be left. The door hanger will kindly ask you to contact the office to set up an appointment for us to change out your off-peak meter. Meter changeouts will only be completed during our normal business hours. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Phone: 218-253-2168

Email info@redlakeelectric.com

Get more out of a modern cooling system.
Get year-round comfort.
Get top-notch efficiency.

GET AIR-SOURCE HEAT **PUMPED**.



Air Conditioner

Cooling during warm summer days

Absorbs inside heat and expels it from your home, then creates chilled air to push back into your home

Wall units **lack efficiency**, as they only provide spot cooling and air can leak through window seals. Central air units are comparable to ASHPs in summer

- Smaller upfront cost, but does not offer heating
- No installation rebates offered

VS



Up to
\$500/ton
in rebates!

Air-Source Heat Pump

CAN I USE IT
YEAR-ROUND?



Heating and cooling through every season

IS IT
VERSATILE?



Works like an air conditioner in the summer, but offers the **versatility** of the reverse process to heat your home in the winter

IS IT
EFFICIENT?



Super energy efficient, as the unit moves both cooled and heated air throughout the home

CAN I SAVE
MONEY?



- **Large rebates** available for unit installation
- **Sustained savings** through energy efficiency

Bonus Winter Benefit:

Electric ASHP heating is **much more efficient** and **cost-effective** than fuel heat technology, delivering up to three times more energy than the electricity it uses.

PUMP UP YOUR SAVINGS WITH AN AIR-SOURCE HEAT PUMP!

Contact Member Services at 218-253-2168 or visit redlakeelectric.com

NEW & IMPROVED BILL DESIGN

NEW FEATURES ON YOUR BILL

Front of bill

- 1 Account number. This is a new account number you will need to sign up for SmartHub, your online bill portal.
- 2 Amount due and due date.
- 3 Past due and disconnect notice printed here. If you haven't paid your bill be sure to contact us by the disconnect date.
- 4 Meter and usage information.
- 5 Monthly kWh usage and history graph. Main usage is graphed in red.
- 6 Average temperature and average daily use during billing cycle.
- 7 Explanation of how bill was calculated.
- 8 Total bill and due date for current bill. Past due and amounts are shown above.
- 9 Access to SmartHub - your online access to your billing information.
- 10 Off-peak information: If you have off-peak, these are your load group (Group) and double order (DO) numbers from your ripple receiver. Use these numbers to check if your heating load is being controlled. Use Red Lake Electric's website, <http://redlake.lm.minnkota.com/status/>.

Back of bill

- 1 Information about payment options.
- 2 Description of steps to follow during a power outage.
- 3 Information about current customer programs.

Red Lake Electric Cooperative
P.O. Box 430, Red Lake Falls, MN 56750
Phone: (218) 253-2168 or (800) 243-6068
Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 am - 4:30 pm
Website: www.redlakeelectric.com
Email: info@redlakeelectric.com

1 ACCOUNT NUMBER 99999
Customer Name: JOHN DOE
Statement Date: 06/08/2019
Payment Due: 06/25/2019

2 TOTAL DUE \$627.90

3 *DISCONNECT NOTICE*****
PAST DUE AMOUNT OF \$398.90 MUST BE PAID BY 05/16/19 TO AVOID DISCONNECTION

4 Account Number: 99999 **Service Address:** 12345 ANY ROAD
Meter # 11111 Location # 1234567
22222 1234567

5 Message from RLEC
You will notice the new billing format. We have made the conversion to NISC billing software. If you want to pay your bill online you can sign up on SmartHub.

6 kWh Usage History
PERIOD ENDING 04/30/18 04/30/19
Avg Daily Temp 34 42
Avg Daily kWh 210 70

7 Current Service Detail
Previous Activity: 393.00
Late Charge: 5.90
No Payment Received: 0.00
Account Balance Before Current Charges: 398.90
Current Activity: 239.00
Total Amount Due: 627.90

8 Account Number 99999
TO AVOID SHUTOFF PAY \$398.90 BY 05/16/2019

9 SmartHub
RED LAKE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
PO BOX 430
RED LAKE FALLS MN 56750-0430

10 Please check here and note address changes below:
3236 1 AV 0.380
JOHN DOE
12345 ANY ROAD
RED LAKE FALLS, MN 56750
C-10 P-10

1 Payment Options
• Online Payment (Bank Account or Credit/Debit Card): Click on the SmartHub link on our website, www.redlakeelectric.com or go to www.redlakeelectric.com/smarthub.coop. Here you can set up payments, request paperless billing, set up auto pay monthly payments, and check your kWh usage.
• 24 Hour Pay by Phone: Call 1-844-379-1666 to make a payment any time with our toll-free, automatic, secure, payment system.
• 24 Hour Drive-up Payment Drop Box: Located in the parking lot of our office, 412 International Drive SW, Red Lake Falls, MN. Payment envelopes are included with your monthly billing statement. Please send your date listed at the top of your bill.
• Mail: Payment envelopes are included with your monthly billing statement. Please send your date listed at the top of your bill.
• Pay In Person: During regular business hours (M-F / 8 am to 4:30 pm) you may bring your payment into our office.
For more information, please contact our Customer Service Representatives by calling 218-253-2168 or email info@redlakeelectric.com

2 Power Outages
Please follow the steps below:
• Check your fuses and breakers to ensure the problem is not within your electrical system.
• If you have determined the outage is on Red Lake Electric's system, please report it by calling 218-253-2200, 24 hours a day / 7 days a week.
• Stay away from downed power lines and DO NOT TOUCH them!

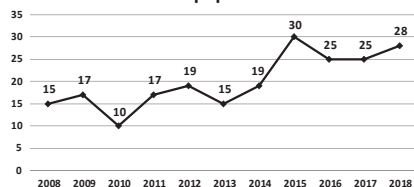
3 Customer Programs
Residential, commercial and industrial energy efficiency rebates on a variety of appliance and equipment is available. Please see our website www.redlakeelectric.com for more information on the current rebates and programs.
Rebate forms are available on our website www.redlakeelectric.com or contact our operations department 218-253-2168 or email info@redlakeelectric.com

Call Before You Dig
For your safety, Minnesota law requires home and business owners planning to do any excavation or digging within the state to notify Gopher State One Call by calling 811 at least 72 hours prior to excavation, go to www.gopherstateonecall.org or contact our operations department 218-253-2168.

QUICK TAKES

A look at some statistics from your Red Lake Electric Cooperative

Vehicle & Equipment Contacts



In hopes that something can be learned from knowing the mistakes of others, examples of how these accidents occurred in Red Lake Electric's service area:

- Combine auger hitting power line
- Backhoe digging into buried cable
- Vehicle backing into pole
- Tractor hitting and breaking pole
- Tree falling onto power line while cutting
- Cultivator snagging a guy wire
- Crop sprayer hitting power line
- Wind blowing ladder into secondaries

Many of you are already busy planting crops this spring. Because spring and fall are the times when we see most line and equipment contacts, please think safety as you go about your work.

NOTICE OF NAMES

Hidden within the text of the articles of this issue of the *Volts & Jolts* are the names and account numbers of some Red Lake Electric Cooperative members. They will appear within the articles in parentheses as such (9999999.99 Willie Ray 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.



Avoid placing items like lamps and televisions near your air conditioning thermostat. The thermostat senses heat from these appliances, which can cause the AC to run longer than necessary.

Source: energy.gov

Take control of your account with SmartHub!



Now you can see your daily and monthly usage, pay/view your bill online, plus a whole host of other useful services with SmartHub. SmartHub is a free and secure online energy portal at www.redlakeelectric.com that allows members to do the following things:

- View daily and monthly energy use.
- View and pay your bills online.
- Go paperless and receive an email notice when your bill is ready to view.
- Compare energy use to changes in temperature.



Scan the QR code for online access to SmartHub

If you have questions regarding SmartHub, call us at 218-253-2168 or send an email to info@redlakeelectric.com.

Check out our great rebate offers!

Electric Heating Rebates

Must be on off-peak

Electric plenum heaters

Easily converts your existing fossil fuel furnace into a dual-fuel heating system. You are able to use the most efficient, cost-effective heating source – fossil fuel or electricity – at any time.

Rebate of \$50 per kilowatt (kW)

Electric thermal storage heaters

Draws electricity during off-peak hours when it is cheaper. Heat is stored in specially designed bricks to provide comfort 24 hours a day.

Rebate of \$60 per kW

Air-source heat pumps

(including mini-split ductless option)

Works just like a central air conditioner in the summer. In the fall and winter, they provide super-efficient supplemental heat.

Up to 16 SEER: Rebate of \$300 per ton
17 SEER or greater: Rebate of \$500 per ton



Geothermal heat pumps

Provides the highest efficiency for space heating and cooling available today. The system transfers heat to and from the earth using only small amounts of electricity.

Closed loop: Rebate of \$400 per ton
Open loop: Rebate of \$200 per ton



Electric underfloor boiler

A popular off-peak option because the system transfers consistently across the floor to reach people and objects, providing both comfort and efficiency. Applications include electric boiler with hydronic tubing.

Rebate of \$50 per kW

Other electric heating systems

Options include electric baseboards, cove heaters, electric floor cable, mats and more.

Rebate of \$20 per kW

Electric Water Heater Rebates

Must be on off-peak



100 gallon or greater

\$350 rebate

56-99 gallon

\$300 rebate

55 gallon or less

\$150 rebate

Bonus rebates:

Add \$250
if converting from natural gas or propane.
Add \$100 for new building construction.

Electric Vehicle Charger Rebates

240V Level 2 Charger

Must be on off-peak



Electric vehicle or hybrid

\$50 rebate

Residential Charger Commercial Charger

Commercial – Forklifts, Zambonis, etc.

\$50 rebate

All equipment must be new and installed on Red Lake Electric Cooperative's system.

Equipment must be installed on RLEC's off-peak program.

Contact Member Services for more details!

218-253-2168

June is National Dairy Month

This June, celebrate National Dairy Month with your favorite dairy treat. Originally established as a grocery/milk promotion in 1937, National Dairy Month now acts as a reminder of the health benefits that dairy products provide. They contain essential nutrients – including calcium, potassium, vitamin D, and protein. They also reduce the risk of high blood pressure, osteoporosis, and certain cancers while helping us to better manage our weight. Kick start each day with nutrient-rich dairy products and start your summer on a healthy note.

Visit <https://nationaltoday.com/national-dairy-month/> to learn more.



CONTROLLED BURN TIPS

Properly controlled burns can have many benefits for agricultural land. However, if these burns are not managed safely, they can cause property damage, power outages, injury and even death. Safe Electricity urges you to make safety a priority and shares tips on special considerations to be taken around power lines.

First, make yourself aware of laws and regulations. Only those who are experienced with fire and burn paths should conduct controlled burns. Alert those who potentially may be affected by the burn – including neighbors, the local fire department and law enforcement. Depending on local regulations, you may also need to obtain a burn permit.

Take special note of power poles and lines. Burning a power pole could cause a widespread power outage and be costly for the individual responsible for the fire.

Cut down grass and weeds, and water the area near the poles as to not encourage fires to encroach. Be careful to keep water streams out of power lines.

If a power pole catches on fire, call the fire department and alert Red Lake Electric to handle the possible electrical dangers. Even if you think you can put out the fire yourself, alert the utility to the fact that it caught fire. The creosote preservative could still be burning the pole from the inside out. In addition, if the pole catches on fire, it could create shock or electrocution hazards to those who may be nearby or spark fires in unintended directions from downed lines.

Also, keep environmental factors, such as temperature, humidity and wind direction and (20850 Yvonne Underdahl) speed in mind. The wind speed in the area should be low and in a steady direction as to not let the fire get out of control. As environmental factors are subject to change, check forecasts and actual conditions before you begin the burn.

– Source: safeelectricity.org

May is National Electrical Safety Month

Home Electrical Safety

Always Look Up Always

Before starting **any** project, be alert of where the power lines are located, and know how high they are hanging. Whether you're working on the roof, trimming trees, or painting your siding, it's your job to be aware and to **alert others about nearby power lines.**



1. Locate all overhead power lines.



2. Stay at least 10 feet away from all overhead power lines.



3. Do not touch anything in contact with power line.



4. Carry ladders and equipment horizontally.



5. Stay at least 35 feet away from downed power lines and call 911.



www.facebook.com/ESFI.org



www.twitter.com/ESFI.dot.org



www.youtube.com/ESFI.dot.org

When the cows are looking for extra feed, Mike and Linda's robots get rolling. When the milking process needs to be safe and reliable, they have the technology. When the supply data is flowing fast, they're connected.

They have the passion.
They have the purpose.
They have the power.

Electricity makes these dairy farmers
COMMUNITY PROVIDERS.



 **ELECTRICITY**
WE SHARE OUR POWER SO YOU CAN SHARE YOURS