



# Volts & Jolts

Published monthly for the members of Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
SERVING THE FOUR-COUNTY AREA OF MARSHALL, PENNINGTON, RED LAKE AND POLK  
and a portion of the lands of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

– OF –

### ANNUAL MEETING

All members of Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc. are hereby notified of its annual meeting. The annual meeting will take place at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, March 25, 2020 at the Ralph Engelstad Arena in Thief River Falls.

The meeting agenda includes year 2019 in review, financial reports and election of directors. Door prizes will be awarded and a sit-down lunch will be served. Please contact general manager Stephanie Johnson to make arrangements for dietary needs.

All members are encouraged to attend.

/s/ Mark Hanson, Secretary

### Red Lake Electric Cooperative Director qualification requirements

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

- Is not a member of the Cooperative and 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 business.
- 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 nominations, petitions due Feb. 24

Each year the terms of three of Red Lake Electric Cooperative's (RLEC) directors expire the day of the annual meeting. Members of each of the three districts whose present director's terms will expire March 25 have elected director candidates at the recently held district meetings.

The names of the candidates are Bonnie Christians, Crookston, District 1; Steve Linder, Oklee, District 4; and Mark Hanson, Thief River Falls, District 5.

Their names will be placed in the nomination at the annual meeting. Any other member within these districts wishing to have their name placed in nomination must do so by petition. The petition is due in the RLEC office in Red Lake Falls by 10 a.m. February 24, 2020.

At least 15 members of the district must sign the petition for the director nominee. The nominee's name will then be placed on the election ballot at the annual meeting March 25 at the Ralph Engelstad Arena in Thief River Falls.

Petition forms are available at the RLEC office in Red Lake Falls. Contact Stephanie Johnson, Cooperative Manager, at 800-245-6068 or 253-2168 for more information.

### Rate increase effective May 1

Red Lake Electric Cooperative's board of directors approved a \$5.00 facility charge increase that will be effective May 1, reflected on the bill our members will receive in June 2020.

Warmer winters have caused a decline in kWh sales. This, in turn, has caused a decline in revenue. Each year, your cooperative sets a budget with a goal of having between \$350,000 to \$500,000 in margins. The 2019 margins were lower than anticipated. With declining revenue and slowly increasing expenses, (27680 Keith Baumgartner) your board of directors approved a \$5.00 facility charge increase to satisfy our budgeted margins.

The facility charge component of your rate is a charge that is billed to the members to partially recover the cost of the infrastructure that is in place to distribute power to your home. The cooperative has been increasing the facilities charge over the years to more fairly recover the actual cost of providing this service and reducing the increase in the energy rate.

A summary comparing RLEC present rates to the new rates that will be effective May 1, 2020, is located on page 3.

Published 10 times a year, January through May, July and September through December, by 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](mailto:info@redlakeelectric.com).

## **OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

President . . . . . Randy Versdahl  
Vice President . . . . . Stacy Blawat  
Secretary-Treasurer . . . . . Mark Hanson  
Directors . . . . . Cecil Anderson,  
Aaron Chervestad, Bonnie Christians,  
Colette Kujava, Steve Linder, Peter Mosbeck

Stephanie Johnson . . . . . General Manager  
Steve Conely . . . . . Manager of Electric  
System Operations  
Kelli Brateng . . . . . Manager of Member Services

## **OFFICE HOURS**

Monday-Friday  
8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Phone: (218) 253-2168  
Toll-Free: 1-800-245-6068  
Fax: (218) 253-2630



## **AFTER HOURS/OUTAGE CALLS 218-253-2200**

Website: [www.redlakeelectric.com](http://www.redlakeelectric.com)  
Email: [info@redlakeelectric.com](mailto:info@redlakeelectric.com)

## **CALL BEFORE YOU DIG 1-800-252-1166 or 811**

## **MINNESOTA STATE ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS**

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

**Wayne Bergstrom – 701-520-9771**

Pennington and eastern Marshall Counties:

**Ronald Ditsch – 218-779-6758**

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](http://www.dli.mn.gov) for more information. The inspectors can be reached week-day mornings between 7 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



## **We love our community**

With Valentine's Day approaching, we can't think of a better time to express how much we love this community and enjoy serving you, the members of the cooperative.

When we helped to bring electricity to rural Minnesota many years ago, the quality of life improved for all. Through the years, other issues needed to be tackled, and we have been at the forefront to address some of those issues. We want to meet the long-term needs of our community to ensure it continues to thrive – because just like you, we live here, too.

While our top priority is to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you, equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the consumer-members (that's you!) that we serve. This focus to benefit the larger community is central to the way we operate as a cooperative. Red Lake Electric Cooperative knows that electricity is a critical need for modern-day life, but it takes more than poles and power lines to make a community.

Over time, our cooperative has evolved to meet the changing needs of our community, thereby improving the quality of life for everyone. And that can mean many different things. It can mean education scholarships contributing more to Operation Round Up – a program that helps local area nonprofit organizations – and other worthy programs.

Since 1993, Operation Round Up has donated over \$550,000 to community projects, youth programs, elderly services, local food shelves, area fire departments, local ambulance services and many other community nonprofit organizations.

We all benefit from these programs because of you and your neighbors. You empower RLEC through your membership and through your participation in these programs.

As a local business, we are proud to power your life and bring good things to our community. We hope you will continue to guide our efforts by sharing your perspective as we plan for the future. The energy landscape is undergoing dramatic change fueled by evolving technology and consumer desires for more options. While (21325 Jeff & Lesley Brouse) the larger environment in which we operate is constantly changing, one thing remains the same. By working together, I'm certain we can continue to do good things for our community.

## **Facility charge increase**

The facility charge component of your rate is a charge that is billed to the members to partially recover the cost of the infrastructure that is in place to distribute power to your home. The cooperative has been increasing the facilities charge over the years to more fairly recover the actual cost of providing this service and reducing the increase in the energy rate.

Red Lake Electric Cooperative's board of directors approved a \$5 facility charge increase that will be effective May 1, reflected on the bill our members will receive in June 2020.

If you have any questions or concerns about this increase, please email, call or even write us a note. We are prepared to answer clearly and honestly any questions you may have.

**See you on March 25  
at the Annual Meeting!**

# Retail Rate Change

## Effective May 1, 2020 (June 2020 Bill)

### Rate 1, General Service

	Current Rate	New Rate
Monthly facilities charge		
1.5 - 10 kVA transformer	\$30.00	\$35.00
11 - 25 kVA transformer	\$33.00	\$38.00
26 - 75 kVA transformer	\$38.00	\$43.00
All kilowatt-hours (Dec-Feb)	\$0.106	No change
All kilowatt-hours (Mar-Nov)	\$0.102	No change
Multiphase surcharge	\$22.00	No change

### Rate 2, On-Peak Service over 75 kVA Transformer

Monthly facilities charge	\$54.00	\$59.00
All kilowatt-hours	\$0.065	No change
Demand charge per kW (Dec-Feb)	\$16.00	No change
Demand charge per kW (Mar-Nov)	\$11.00	No change

### Rate 3, Seasonal Service over 75 kVA Transformer

Monthly facilities charge	\$0.64	0.700
All kilowatt-hours (Dec-Feb)	\$0.106	No change
All kilowatt-hours (Mar-Nov)	\$0.102	No change
Multiphase surcharge	\$22.00	No change

### Rate 4, Interruptible Service over 25 kVA Transformer

Monthly facilities charge	\$54.00	\$59.00
All kilowatt-hours	\$0.065	No change
Multiphase surcharge	\$22.00	No change

### Renewable Energy Surcharge

All kilowatt-hours	\$0.004	No change
--------------------	---------	-----------

### Off-Peak Heating Rates

Monthly off-peak equipment charge	\$5.75	No change
Short-term control per kWh	\$0.079	No change
Long-term control per kWh	\$0.056	No change

### Security Lighting Service

Metered security lighting	\$7.00	No change
Unmetered security lighting	\$8.00	No change

### Standby Service (retain de-energized service only)

Monthly charge	\$13.00	No change
----------------	---------	-----------



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

### Chicken Alfredo Lasagna Roll Ups

10 lasagna noodles  
3 cups chicken, cooked and shredded  
16 ounces ricotta cheese  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon Italian seasoning  
½ teaspoon onion powder  
½ teaspoon garlic powder  
1½ cups alfredo sauce, jarred  
2 cups mozzarella cheese, shredded  
1 cup parmesan cheese, shredded

Bring a pot of water to a boil. Add lasagna noodles and cook according to package instructions until al dente. Drain water from the pot and place noodles on a flat surface. (I suggest using a piece of parchment paper).

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

In a large bowl combine shredded chicken, ricotta cheese, salt, onion powder, garlic powder and Italian seasoning.

With the lasagna noodles on a flat surface, spread 3 ounces of the chicken mixture on each noodle. Leave one-third of the noodle bare. Top the chicken mixture with 1-2 tablespoons of alfredo sauce. Starting at the end of the noodle roll it up, rolling towards the bare end of the noodle.

Add 1/4 cup of alfredo sauce to the bottom of a casserole dish. Place each lasagna roll into the casserole dish. Pour the remaining alfredo sauce over (29666 Marty Collins) the lasagna roll ups. Top with shredded mozzarella and parmesan cheese.

Cover dish with aluminum foil and bake for 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, remove the aluminum foil and continue to bake for 10 minutes or until the cheese is melted and bubbling.

*Note:* You can save time by using rotisserie chicken for your shredded chicken.



# District meetings held in January

Three district meetings were held within Red Lake Electric Cooperative's (RLEC) service area at the beginning of February. Topics reviewed at the meetings included 2019 in review, facilities charge increase, Automated Meter Infrastructure (AMI) update, energy rebate incentives, website tutorial and available payment options.

In her manager's report, Stephanie Johnson discussed current year accomplishments as well as projects RLEC will be working on in 2020. Current year discussion included energy sales and facility charge increase, new service construction and safety.

In her report from member services, Kelli Brateng shared the many options available for electric heat and electric water heater rebate incentives. Brateng also informed members on the option to receive text or email notifications during load management periods. She also gave an update on the employee services available in the member service department. The Cooperative will continue its work on replacing meters with automated metering infrastruc-

ture. RLEC is about 75% completed with this conversion. Brateng touched on the new online bill pay option, Smart Hub.

The District 5 meeting was held the evening of Feb. 4 at Community Church, Thief River Falls. Cooperative members in attendance unanimously elected Mark Hanson, the incumbent director, as the director candidate from the district.

The District 4 meeting was held Feb. 5 at Oklee Community Hall, Oklee. Steve Linder was unanimously elected as the director candidate of the district.

The District 1 meeting was held Feb. 6 at St. Peter's Catholic Church, Gentilly. Incumbent director, Bonnie Christians, was unanimously (27142 Dean Holtan) elected as the director candidate of the district.

A total of 45 members and friends attended the three meetings. Door prizes were awarded and pie and coffee were served.

## District 5

**Tuesday, Feb. 4**  
Community Church  
Thief River Falls



Sixteen members and friends were in attendance at the District 5 meeting held at the Community Church, Thief River Falls. Pie, coffee and fellowship were enjoyed after the meeting.



Luther Kaushagen of Thief River Falls was the winner of ratchet straps and Joan Strong of Thief River Falls won a fragrance wax warmer at the District 5 meeting.



# District 4

**Wednesday, Feb. 5**  
Oklee Community Hall  
*Oklee*



Twelve members listened to Stephanie Johnson and Kelli Brateng give a review of 2019 and what to look forward in 2020.



(Left to right) Eddie and Sharon Larson of Oklee were lucky winners. Eddie won a flashlight and Sharon won a crockpot. Other door prize winners at the District 4 meeting were Leslie Hofstad of Plummer, ratchet straps; Wallace Nelson of Brooks, fragrance wax warmer; and Roger Asselin of Brooks, an insulated cup.



Christie Klipping welcome and registered Richard & Adeline Maygra and all the guests at the District 1 meeting held Feb. 6 at the St. Peter's Catholic Church, Gentilly.



Loren Sanderson volunteered to chair the meeting.



Some of the lucky door prize winners were: Marcel Vaudrin, Cat gloves; Norma Hoppe, popcorn popper; and Pat Froehler, a fragrance wax warmer; all from Crookston.



# District 1

**Thursday, Feb. 6**  
St. Peter's Catholic Church  
*Gentilly*

## Electrical safety and conservation websites

The following is a list of websites that can provide information and education in reference to electrical safety and energy conservation. These websites are listed as links (31161 Trevor Roppel) on Red Lake Electric's website 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)
- U.S. 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)
- U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission: [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)



### 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 (999999.99 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.



### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Placing hot food in the refrigerator makes the appliance work harder than necessary, using more energy. Allow food to cool down before you place it in the fridge.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



Like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/redlakeelectric](http://www.facebook.com/redlakeelectric)

## VOTING DELEGATE CERTIFICATION

Members that are corporations, churches, townships, schools or other government units may vote at the annual meeting. This form must be filled out, signed by officers and presented at the annual meeting registration desk or returned with a mail ballot.

The \_\_\_\_\_ has, at an official  
Name of Member

meeting, designated \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Delegate

to represent us at the 2020 annual meeting of the Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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

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



## FEDERAL/STATE ENERGY ASSISTANCE

If you need help paying your electric utility bill, you may qualify for state or federal fuel assistance. For complete qualification and application information, contact your local county welfare or community/citizen's action council listed below. These organizations may also provide budget counseling.

**Inter-County Community Council**  
Oklee, MN  
*Serves East Polk, Pennington and Red Lake Counties*  
218-796-5144  
Toll-free: 1-888-778-4008  
Fax: 218-796-5175

**Tri-Valley Opportunity Council**  
Crookston, MN  
*Serves West Polk, West Marshall County*  
218-281-9080  
Toll-free: 1-866-264-3729  
Fax: 218-281-0705

**Northwest Community Action**  
Badger, MN  
*Serves East Marshall County*  
218-528-3258  
Toll-free: 1-800-568-5329  
Fax: 218-528-3259

**Red Lake Community Action Agency**  
Red Lake, MN  
*Serves Beltrami County*  
218-679-1880

## ELECTRIC HEAT EXEMPTION

This is to certify that the primary source of heat for my residence is electricity and I am eligible for the electric heating sales tax exemption as provided by Minnesota State Law. The primary source supplies more heat than any other source for the largest period of time during the heating season.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Account Number \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_





## Operation Round Up® grant applications due February 28

Organizations involved in community projects and charities are encouraged to apply for funds from Operation Round Up at this time. Completed grant applications are due in the Red Lake Electric Cooperative (RLEC) office by Friday, Feb. 28.

Operation Round Up is a program adopted by RLEC headquartered in Red Lake Falls. Members choosing to “round up” their monthly electric bill payment provide funds for this effort. Today 96% of RLEC members now choose to contribute pennies each month to enhance their communities.

Funds will be donated primarily to nonprofit organizations to help fund specific projects or programs. Since the program began in 1993, \$562,816 has been granted to community organizations and charities. Money is donated for the (23829 Mark Stenseth) betterment of the com-

munity within the outside service area boundaries of RLEC.

The Red Lake Electric Trust Board of Directors determines grants. Board members are Julie Stennes, Thief River Falls; Tishara Melcher, Middle River; Diane Kolstoe, Oklee; Stephanie Johnson, Gatzke; and Bonnie Christians, Crookston.

To apply for Operation Round Up grants, organizations should contact the RLEC office in Red Lake Falls at 218-253-2168 or 800-245-6068. A short application must be completed and submitted, along with a financial statement from the organization.

Grant application forms are available on the cooperative’s website: [www.redlake-electric.com](http://www.redlake-electric.com).

For more information contact Stephanie Johnson, general manager of RLEC, at 218-253-2168 or 800-245-6068.

## The Power of SmartHub



### Use SmartHub on a desktop or mobile app to:

- Pay your bill
- View energy usage
- Compare usage
- Manage account settings



### To get started:

- Visit [www.redlakeelectric.com](http://www.redlakeelectric.com) and click on the SmartHub logo on the homepage.
- Enter your RLEC account number, last name and email address to create your SmartHub account.
- You will receive an email to finalize your registration.
- Complete your registration and download the SmartHub mobile app for total control over your electric account.

# ALL IN

ALL-OF-THE-ABOVE ENERGY

In North Dakota and Minnesota, we don't slow down when it's 30 below.

Our electricity has to be tough and dependable. Like us.

That's why we combine the diverse strengths of our region's renewable resources with our steadfast supply of lignite coal — to ensure reliable power even when the wind isn't blowing and the sun isn't shining.

No, we don't slow down when things freeze up.

Because we're all in on all-of-the-above energy.



**Red Lake Electric  
Cooperative, Inc.**



## Recent cold snap reaffirms importance of Project Tundra

*By Mac McLennan, president & CEO of Minnkota Power Cooperative*



When temperatures across the region dropped to 30 below zero in mid-January, most of us hurried indoors, turned up the heat and flipped on our computers and TVs for entertainment. There likely wasn't a second thought as to where the electricity powering our region was coming from during those bitterly cold days.

As demand for electricity increased, there were stretches when almost all of the Upper Midwest's energy came from a combination of coal, natural gas and nuclear. This is not a new phenomenon. Routinely, subzero temperatures can limit the ability for wind and solar to produce energy for homes and businesses when they need it most.

For Minnkota Power Cooperative and its member cooperatives in eastern North Dakota (including Cavalier Rural Electric) and northwest Minnesota, coal was the primary reason the lights (and everything else) stayed on.

Coal is a low-cost and reli-

able resource, but it is challenged in today's world as society focuses on making significant reductions in carbon dioxide emissions. That's why Minnkota is pursuing Project Tundra – a major initiative to build the world's largest carbon capture facility right here in North Dakota.

The project aims to transform our largest coal unit into a near-zero carbon emissions resource using state-of-the-art technology. The CO<sub>2</sub> removed by Project Tundra would be returned to the land it came from. Directly under the coal mine that provides fuel to the power plant, there is a deep geologic rock formation more than one mile below the surface to safely store the CO<sub>2</sub>. If we're successful, we will remove an amount of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent to permanently taking 600,000 gasoline-fueled vehicles off the road. More importantly, Project Tundra could be used as a blueprint by utilities in the United States and countries around the

world who plan to continue using coal as a resource. The project is currently in the advanced engineering and design phase, with a goal to begin construction within the next few years.

Our nation is striving toward a cleaner electric grid, but that doesn't mean we have to shut down all fossil fuel generators and depend solely on wind and solar facilities. In our region, that simply won't work. The stakes are too high. When it's 30 below zero, we need electricity so reliable that we don't have to think twice about it.

