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Cooperative employees share first place in parade

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Washington DC Youth Tour

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Coal Creek Tour June 21-23

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Official publication of



www.mcleodcoop.com

## Please complete the satisfaction survey in your bill this month

You could win a \$100 electric bill credit

he Cooperative
would really like
to know how
satisfied you are with your
electric service. Every few
years we send a satisfaction
survey to our members to
request your opinion. We
want your feedback.



All MCPA members will receive a survey in their electric bill in mid-January. Please fill out the survey form, seal it and put it in the mail. It is a postage-paid mailer and will go right to the company tabulating the surveys for us. If you put your name and phone number in the space provided you will be entered in the \$100 prize drawing. This survey provides important information to the Cooperative. It shows us how satisfied you are with your rates and service compared to previous years. It shows us where

improvement may be needed. It gives you an opportunity to tell us what additional services you would like to see us offer. It helps us meet your needs better. So, please take a few moments and complete your survey in January.

Presorted Standar
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #60
HUTCHINSON, MN
55350



Minnesota Association of Cooperatives is sponsoring an educational program for high school students in grades 10-12.

# This two-day conference is scheduled for March 15-16 in Roseville, Minnesota.

The program provides an opportunity for youth to learn about the purpose, operation and value of cooperative business.

Interested students may contact the cooperative for an application form. Call Sue at 1-800-494-6272 ext. 502 if you have questions. Deadline to sign up is February 22.

# Expect electric bills to be higher than last month

higher electric bills this month. Last month

most members received

capital credit payments

applied to their electric bills,

reducing the total amount due.

embers should expect

And except for farmers drying corn in November, most members enjoyed lower than normal November usage, making December payments less. In January, electric bills will be back to normal winter use, with no extra credits applied. Plus, December of 2009 was much colder than average, with several nights below zero. This increases electric use at most members' homes and farms. Please call the office if you have any questions.

### Plan to attend the 75th Annual Meeting

his year is something special. McLeod Cooperative Power will be celebrating 75 years of providing service to its members. Mark your calendar to attend the annual meeting on Tuesday, April 6, 2010 at the Hutchinson Event Center. We are hoping to serve members a light supper, followed by some entertainment and an evening business meeting. You won't want to miss this historical event.



responders and other nonprofit organizations are welcome to apply to McLeod Cooperative Power's Operation Round Up Trust for donation assistance. The trust is able to donate funds to worthy local projects in McLeod, Renville, Sibley or McLeod Counties. Funding is from the generosity of electric

cooperative members who round up their electric bills.

Application forms are available by calling the Cooperative at 1-800-494-6272. Applications for funding must be completed and returned to the Cooperative by March 1, 2010.



Some of the parade volunteers were: trees, Debbie Ebert, Katie Ide and Jan Sanderson; Santa, Kris Ingenthron; presents, Craig Marti, Jonathan Geiger and their families. Congratulations on a first-rate effort.

## Cooperative employees participate in Glencoe Holly Days lighted parade

and share first place entry honors

group of employees of McLeod Cooperative Power and their families participated in Glencoe's Holly Days lighted parade on December 12. They dressed up as decorated, illuminated Christmas trees, Christmas presents and Santa Claus, walking alongside a bucket truck decorated with lights. Their entry tied for first place along with the Hair Studio. The parade, which was sponsored by the Glencoe Lions, had 24 entries.

### **B**oard of **D**irectors

District 1

Oria Brinkmeier, Lester Prairie

District 2

Dale Peters, Secretary-Treasurer **Brownton** 

District 3

Roger Karstens, Hutchinson

District 4

Curtis Rossow, Buffalo Lake

District 5

Allan Duesterhoeft, Hutchinson

District 6

Lester Ranzau, Glencoe

District 7

Bill Polchow, Asst. Secretary-Treasurer Silver Lake

District 8

Doug Kirtz, Vice-President

Hector

District 9

Gerald Roepke, President New Germany

### McLeod Cooperative Power Association News

The McLeod Cooperative Power Association News is published monthly by McLeod Cooperative Power Association

> PO Box 70 1231 Ford Ave. Glencoe, MN 55336

General Manager: Kris Ingenthron Editor: Sue Pawelk

The McLeod Cooperative Power Association News is the official member publication of McLeod Cooperative Power Association and focuses on our members, programs and events. All member story ideas and comments are welcome. Send to Sue Pawelk, editor, at the above address.

### **Office Hours:**

Monday - Friday 7:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Phone: 320-864-3148 1-800-494-6272 24-hour outage: 1-800-927-5685 Fax: 320-864-4850

Web site: www.mcleodcoop.com

Gopher State One Call 1-800-252-1166

# Nominations by petition for director candidacy to be submitted by March 12

Cooperative members residing in Districts 7, 8, or 9 may petition to have their name added to the slate of candidates for the 2010 director election in their district. To have another name on the ballot in addition to the two candidate names selected by the nominating committee, you may file a nomination by petition.

The petition must be signed by 20 or more McLeod Cooperative Power Association electric members residing in your district and it must be submitted to the cooperative secretary not less than 25 days prior to the Annual Meeting. The last day that a petition can be submitted is March 12, 2010.

The cooperative secretary shall post at the Cooperative office the names of additional nominations and also persons selected by the nominating committee.

District 7 includes: Hale, Rich Valley and Glencoe Townships in McLeod County and part of Stockholm Township in Wright County.

**District 8** includes: Melville,

Palmyra, Martinsburg, Bandon, Norfolk, Wellington, and Bird Island Townships in Renville County, and Grafton, Moltke, and Bismarck Townships in Sibley County.

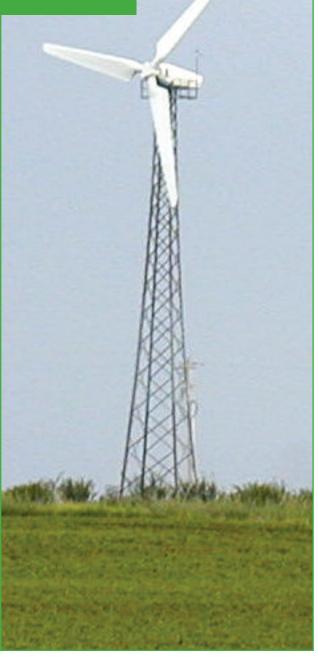
**District 9** includes: Hollywood,

Camden, Watertown and Young America Townships in Carver County, and parts of Woodland and Franklin Townships in Wright County.

# MCPA does not endorse specific turbine companies

ecently, a wind turbine sales company from Excelsior, Minnesota sent out a letter making reference to McLeod Cooperative Power. They stated that we would buy excess power, as mandated by the state, from people who purchased their turbine. The Cooperative just wants to make it clear that this company used the Co-op's name without our permission. Although it is correct that we will purchase excess energy from our electric members with a small turbine under 40 kW, they did not mention that there are several administrative items that must be completed first, plus a safety inspection must be done by the state electrical inspector, liability insurance must be in place, and a long list of other conditions must be met.

We just want our members to understand that we do not endorse this company nor any other turbine manufacturer or vendor. We encourage our members who are considering such an investment to contact the Co-op for information concerning their responsibilities and requirements before they move ahead and purchase a turbine. Members also need to do their own homework and educate themselves about wind generation. The Minnesota Department of Commerce is one of the best places to start. Go to their web site at www.energy.mn.gov.



# Director candidate applications due by January 15

ny member from Districts 7, 8, or 9 that would like to submit their name as a director candidate to the nominating committee, should submit a completed director application form to the Cooperative by January 15, 2010. Director application forms were published in the November and December newsletters and are also available upon request.

## Three MCPA members are drawing winners from GRE appliance use survey

e thank the over 400 MCPA members who took the time to complete the appliance use survey sent out this fall by our power supplier Great River Energy. This is important information required to plan for our future power requirement needs.

Three of our members had their names drawn from those completing the survey. They are **James Granger**, **Michael Waletzko**, and **Roger Pagel**.

Each member won a \$100 credit on their electric bill. Congratulations.



# Low-temp sensor best part of security system



A low-temperature alarm helped Robert Smith (right) and his son Mark avoid frozen pipes due to a furnace going out.

Going south? Make sure a low-temp alarm with a security system is on the checklist before heading out.

Robert Smith from Richfield was glad they added a low-temp alarm to their acreage in rural Lakefield.

"The greatest part of the Heartland Security system is the low-temp alarm," Robert stated. "It was midwinter and my son changed out the furnace filter. After changing it, he forgot to put one panel back on the furnace so the fan blew out the pilot light. Then he headed back to the cities. We received the phone call and he turned around and headed south to relight the pilot light."

If the house had frozen up, it would have meant a broken water line, three broken toilets and thousands of dollars of damage, Mark said. Plus, it could have been a month before we came back down to the house. "Get a freeze alarm! The security system is easy to use."

"Even a new furnace can have problems," Robert said. "I have been quite pleased with Heartland Security. We originally bought the system 10 years ago as we had some people going through the outbuildings and items were missing. We even 'caught' our renter. He was at the workbench and heard a 'crunch.' He turned around and was staring down the barrel of the deputy's 45. He had forgotten to turn off the security system."

"I wouldn't want to be without this alarm system," Robert said. "I'm completely happy with this system."

You, too, can enjoy this peace-of mind when you head south. Just call Heartland Security at 1-888-264-6380. Heartland is a subsidiary of your local electric co-op and 12 other electric co-ops in northwestern Iowa, southern and west-central Minnesota.



# Regulation on horizon for carbon, with or without congressional action

n December the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), part of the U.S. government's executive branch, declared that six key greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide, are endangering public health and welfare. Emissions from motor vehicles of four of those greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide, are also said to contribute to dangerous air pollution under this "endangerment finding."

"This action puts a 'foot in the door' for EPA to promulgate sweeping new regulations that could impose strict limits on carbon emissions from power plants, driving up electric bills," warns Glenn English, CEO of the Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), which represents the interests of the nation's 900-plus consumerowned and governed electric cooperatives.

The concern is that with carbon dioxide emissions from vehicles falling under federal Clean Air Act regulation, other emitters of carbon dioxide—fossil fuel-fired power plants included—may also soon be subject to EPA oversight.

"The Clean Air Act as written was never designed to deal with carbon, and it would be awkward at best and probably a disaster at worst," English adds.

Electric co-ops believe that any controls on carbon dioxide should be established by Congress, where the impact of these proposals can have a full public debate. Unfortunately, a climate change bill passed by the U.S. House last summer (H.R. 2454) and another reported by the U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee in November (S. 1733) include unachievable goals and timelines for reducing carbon dioxide emissions, inadequate technology development incentives, and no guarantee that electric bills will remain affordable.

Electric co-ops are fighting to ensure that any climate change policy goals adopted are fair, affordable, and achievable. To make your voice heard in this debate, join NRECA's Our Energy, Our Future  $^{\text{TM}}$  grassroots awareness campaign at www.ourenergy.coop. To date, more than 600,000 of your fellow co-op consumers across the country have already done so.



### and counting.

More than 600,000 electric co-op members from across the nation wrote to their U.S. Senators in 2009. Each postcard called for Congress to pursue fair, affordable, and achievable climate change goals.

Has your voice been heard?

Speak up at www.ourenergy.coop

# Wash Clothes Efficiently Without Getting Caught in the Spin Cycle



ashing machines perform a fairly simple function; getting dirty clothes clean. Yet prospective buyers today can be overwhelmed with all of the different models and "bells and whistles" available, from top-loading, front-loading, high-efficiency (HE), water saver, steaming, to wrinkle-removing models, to name only a few.

Approximately 93 percent of all American households have a clothes washer, adding up to 102 million clothes washers across America. About 9 million washing machines are sold each year—efficient models account for slightly more than one-third of sales.

Energy Star-rated washing machines cost slightly more than their less-efficient counterparts, anywhere from \$400-1,500, depending on other features selected. However, to get a real handle on how much a unit ultimately costs, you must pay close attention to the yellow energy guide. This tells you how much energy the unit uses and how much it will cost you to operate the unit.

An energy-efficient washing machine can save the typical homeowner around \$50 a year, or \$540-\$600 over the life of the appliance. Efficient machines also save more than 5,000 gallons of water annually. The energy and water efficiencies of clothes washers are measured according to their modified energy factor (MEF) and water factor (WF). These criteria generally limit Energy Star qualification to front-loading and advanced top-loading models.

Front-loading clothes washers use a horizontal or tumble-axis basket to lift and drop clothing into the water, instead of rubbing clothes around a central agitator in a full tub. These units use less energy than conventional clothes washers by reducing the amount of hot water needed to clean clothes. Front-loading models also squeeze more water out of clothes by using spin speeds that are two to three times faster than conventional washers, reducing both drying time and energy use.

Energy Star-qualified top-loading models typically use spray valves to rinse clothes, rather than a new tub of water. This method not only reduces the energy required for water heating, but typically saves an average of 15 gallons of water per wash, compared with conventional clothes washers.

Qualified top-loading models also boast sensors to monitor and adjust incoming water temperature. This keeps water hot enough to dissolve the detergent and provide high-performance cleaning, but cool enough to save energy and minimize hot water damage to fabrics. One limitation of efficient top-loading washers is that many models do not offer a high-temperature standard wash option.

By looking for the Energy Star logo and shopping at a store with knowledgeable staff, you should be able to leave with a new washing machine that will, over time, pay for itself.

Source: NRECA's Cooperative Research Network

## Industry

News

# Winter electric reliability outlook generally good

he outlook for electric reliability in North America this winter appears good, announced the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) in its 2009/2010 Winter Reliability Assessment. Reserve margins, including supply and demand-side resources, are expected to exceed NERC's reference planning levels in all regions.

Reduced economic activity has led to a decrease in projected demand and, as a result, higher reserve margins throughout North America over the coming winter season.

Natural gas and wind resources continue to grow — over half of the generation capacity added to the system since last year has been natural gas-fired.

-Energy Central News

## Community-owned wind farm nearly complete

espite lashing winter winds and a harried production schedule, a major wind farm in Grant County is almost complete. Owned by Grant County Wind LLC, the 10 wind turbines, each generating up to 2 Megawatts of power, are the result of Minnesota's Community Based Energy Development (CBED) program. Located 6 miles outside of Hoffman, MN, each 265 foot tower rises above the rolling Grant County Hills. Owned by a collective of roughly 10 different families, they are expected to be up and running by Spring 2010.

When running at peak-output, Runestone Electric Association officials say the turbines should be able to power roughly 400 homes. And while most of the energy will be physically consumed by Grant County homes, it will also be sold to Ottertail Power Company and marketed to the Minneapolis/St. Paul grid. Notably, however, most major wind farms, including Minnesota's Buffalo Ridge, are owned by foreign multi-national companies, according to Ron Hultman of Runestone Electric Coop. "This would be one of the only Minnesota wind farms to be owned by the local people," Hultman said.

~KSAX-TV



technology programs for the 2010-11 school term may apply for a \$500 scholarship. The Cooperative will award up to four \$500 scholarships for local students.

If you are graduating from a high school in McLeod, Renville, Sibley or Carver County or are a resident of one of those four counties, and have been accepted into the line worker program at Minnesota West in Jackson, Minnesota State in Wadena or Rosemount Technical College in Rosemount, you are eligible to apply. Applications and informative career brochures are available by calling the Cooperative at 1-800-494-6272. Applications must be completed and returned by April 15, 2010.

igh school juniors and seniors have until March 5, 2010 to apply for the Cooperative's Washington Youth Tour competition. One local youth will win an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington D.C. June 12-17, 2010, compliments of the Cooperative.

For over 40 years, electric cooperatives have sponsored the annual Rural Electric Youth Tour by sending their high school students to experience first-hand the essence that is our republic. An information packet is available upon request to any high school junior or senior. Just call the Co-op at 1-800-494-6272. You will have until March 5, 2010 to submit your application. Students must complete a questionnaire and application to qualify. Please encourage your child or grandchild to apply. They need only attend a high school in or reside in McLeod, Renville, Sibley or western Carver County.





### This year's Coal Creek Tour is June 21-23

eservations are now being accepted for this popular tour. It is both an educational and fun trip to Bismarck, North Dakota. Tour participants will visit Coal Creek Generating Station, Falkirk Coal Mine, Garrison Dam, North Dakota Heritage Center and Headwaters Fort Mandan Visitors Center (including Fort Mandan, a reconstructed and fully-furnished fort where Lewis & Clark spent a winter). Attendees will go on a drive-through tour of Blue Flint Ethanol which is constructed adjacent to Coal Creek Generating Plant, as well as a scenic tour of other generating facilities in the area.

Cost for adults is \$150 per person. Students 10-18 years of age, who share a room with their parents or grandparents, are \$100 per person. This makes it an affordable mini-vacation. Motor coach

transportation, accommodations at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel and most meals are included. The hotel offers an indoor pool, water slide, hot tub and exercise room. The hotel is located across the street from a shopping mall. So there is plenty to do during free time.

The group leaves the Cooperative about 8 a.m. on Monday, June 21 and returns to Glencoe about 6 p.m. on Wednesday, June 23. Members going on the tour need to be physically able to climb stairs and do a substantial amount of walking. The tour is not suitable for children under 10 years of age.

If you have never been on this tour, we encourage you to sign up. If you have been on the tour before, we will accept your reservation; however, people who have never been to Coal Creek will be

given preference. Call the Cooperative at 800-494-6272 to make reservations with your VISA or Mastercard or return the completed form with your check.

Please reserve places for the				
Coal Creek Tour, June 21-23, 2010.				
Name and Age of Students:				
Name:				
Address:				
Amount Enclosed: \$ Return to: McLeod Cooperative Power Assn., 1231 Ford Avenue, P.O. Box 70, Glencoe, MN 55336.				



This limited time promotion offers you savings on the equipment and allows you to improve your personal comfort and heating costs.



### Excellent opportunity to add a Steffes heater into:

- a bedroom
- office area
- the main living area
- an addition
- the bathroom
- basement
- tutility room
- or anywhere you desire low cost off-peak heat

For more information on how the Steffes Room Heating Systems can benefit you, go to www.heatforlessnow.com.

Good only on purchases made between January 1 and April 15, 2010

### Why electric bills go up in the winter

ven if you don't use electric heat, you may notice that your electric bills are higher during the cold winter months. Below are several factors that can contribute to those higher bills as well as some ideas to lower your energy costs:

- Warm baths feel great on cold days, but extra water heating will increase your electric bill — if you have an electric water heater. To reduce your water heating bill, consider converting your electric water heater to a more efficient off-peak or storage water heater.
- Winter brings holidays, which often means additional cooking and baking — and, of course, those bright holiday lights.
- Shorter days and longer nights mean lights stay on longer both inside and out.
- Most heating systems use electricity for some functions, such as operating the fan,

and many run almost continuously when it's very cold.

- You may be using space heaters in garages, basements or other unheated spaces.
- Electric blankets and heating pads feel cozy on cold nights but will add to your electric bill.
- Engine block heaters on your cars or equipment, or heating wraps on exposed plumbing will increase the amount of energy you use.
- Most families use the clothes dryer more often in winter.

Even if your bills are higher during winter, electricity remains one of the best values around. However, it's important to know what behaviors are having a significant impact on your energy usage, so there are no surprises when you get your bill.

### Special manufacturer rebates on Steffes room storage heaters

Plus the Co-op's \$40 per kW rebate

ntil April 15, 2010 Steffes is offering a special rebate on each of their room storage heaters. The rebate is in addition to the Cooperative's \$40 per kW rebate. This is the perfect time to buy a storage heater as an additional Dual Fuel back-up, to warm a cold room or four season porch. The units operate on the Co-op's off-peak storage program and qualify for the half-price electric rate.

<b>Steffes Model</b>	<u>kW size</u>	Steffes rebate	Co-op rebate
2102	2	\$40	\$80
2103	3	\$60	\$120
2104	4	\$80	\$160
2105	5	\$100	\$200
2106	6	\$120	\$240

Call the Cooperative office to discuss the proper size unit for your home and place an order at 800-494-6272.

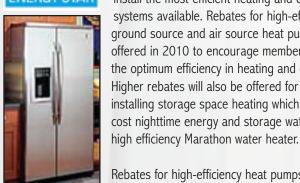


Be aware of power lines and transformers when snowmobiling

- heavy snowfalls can bury transformer boxes and cabinets.
- · Guy lines can seem invisible when going fast on a snowmobile.
- If you see a downed power line, always assume the line is energized, even if it is lying on the ground. Stay away and call 9-1-1- immediately.

## Some changes in rebates for 2010





etting customers to conserve more energy is an important part of minnesota's mandated legislation requiring all utilities to reduce how many kilowatts they sell. One way to help us meet this requirement is to help our members install the most efficient heating and cooling systems available. Rebates for high-efficiency ground source and air source heat pumps will be offered in 2010 to encourage members to choose the optimum efficiency in heating and cooling. Higher rebates will also be offered for members installing storage space heating which uses lowcost nighttime energy and storage water heating using the

Rebates for high-efficiency heat pumps and air conditioners will continue to require installation by a

"registered contractor" which has been designated as a quality installer and is listed on the hvacreducation.net web site. A list of all "registered contractors" in Minnesota is on our Cooperative web site at www.mcleodcoop.com.



### 2010 Rebates

### **Ground Source Heat Pumps**

(controlled or uncontrolled)

Residential	\$400/ton
Commercial	\$200/ton

#### **Air Source Heat Pump**

13 SEER	\$330
14 SEER	\$480
15 SEER	\$580
16 SEER or higher	\$630

#### **Ductless Air Source Heat Pump\$300**

#### **Central Air Conditioner**

13 SEER	\$ 30
14 SEER	\$180
15 SEER	\$280
16 SEER or higher	\$330

Storage Space Heating......\$40/kW

**ENERGY STAR Room Air Conditioners** or ductless mini's .....\$ 35

**Storage Water Heating** with high efficiency water heater\* - Marathon or equivalent energy rated heater Uncontrolled electric going on

Storage Water Program.....\$300

Gas conversion or new construction .....

4 Hr. Peak Shave WH

to Storage Water Program .....\$100

**ENERGY STAR Refrigerator** 

with recycling of old unit .....\$75

**ENERGY STAR Refrigerator or freezer** (new construction only) .....\$50

**ENERGY STAR Clothes Washer** ....\$25

**ENERGY STAR Dehumidifier......**\$25

**ENERGY STAR Dishwasher**.....\$25



What's inside your \$10 Energy Saving Water Kit (\$40 retail value

- The Earth™ Massage Showerhead
- Kitchen Swivel Aerator
- Two Bathroom Faucet Aerators
- Hot Water Temperature Card
- Plumber's Tape

In order to receive this Energy Saving Water Kit at the special discount price, you must be a cooperative member and you must use electricity to heat your water.

YES / NO I'm a member of McLeod Cooperative Power

YES / NO I heat my water with electricity.

SIGNATURE NAME

CITY

PHONE

Niagara Conservation Corp. Attn: Great River Energy Kit Offe Post Office Box 501

ADDRESS

ΕΜΔΙΙ

Allow 2-4 weeks for delivery

Emergency pendants for mom or dad

ou do not need to wait for a special occasion to give an emergency medical pendant from McLeod Cooperative



Power. Although they make a perfect gift for the older person who already has everything, sometimes the need requires immediate action. If you are ready to worry less about elderly parents or grandparents living alone, then this is the time for an emergency pendant. With just one push of a button, your loved ones can get immediate emergency help.

Emergency telephone and pendant systems cost \$30 a month (plus an initial installation fee). These systems provide 24-hour monitoring by a professional dispatch center. The system will summon help for the subscriber whether they are in their home, garage, or yard. It is an excellent safety device for older persons living alone.

Call the Cooperative at 1-800-494-6272 to request an information brochure and pricing.