

Inside this issue...



Wind turbine clarification

3



Reliable transmission means reliable electricity

5



Eco-site opens in Watertown

8

Official publication of



www.mcleodcoop.com

Experience Washington D.C.



Time for high school juniors and seniors to apply

High school juniors and seniors have until March 4, 2011, 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 11-16, 2011 from the Cooperative.

For more than 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 4, 2011 to submit your application. Students 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.

2nd Annual Home & Landscape Showcase *McLeod County Fairgrounds Agribition Building*

Friday, February 4

4 - 8 p.m.

Saturday, February 5

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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Crow River Builders Association

*Home Builders, Remodelers, Landscapers and
Suppliers displaying their products and services*

- Large central display featuring "The Man Cave", "The Great Room" and "The Outdoor Kitchen"
- FREE ADMISSION
- Food and beverages will be available

**Visit McLeod Co-op Power's
booth at the show**

Cooperative employees participate in Glencoe Holly Days lighted parade and share first place entry honors



A group of employees of McLeod Cooperative Power and their families participated in Glencoe's Holly Days lighted parade on December 18. The group dressed up as decorated, illuminated Christmas trees, Christmas presents, stockings, elves and Santa Claus, and walked alongside a bucket truck decorated with lights and a fireplace scene. They tied for first place with Glencoe Light & Power in the entry judging. The parade, which was sponsored by the Glencoe Lions, had many entries.

Found: One silver earring in early December near Co-op front door. Call to describe and claim.

Changes to 2011 Schedule of Charges

Each year the Board of Directors reviews and approves the Schedule of Charges for the coming year. Most fees and charges assessed by the Cooperative did not change for 2011. Only minor increases or decreases in the cost of certain equipment or service charges were made.

New fees for 2011 include a \$5.00 per transaction fee for using a debit or credit card to pay for your electric bill, a \$50.00 fee to submit a small power producer application, and a \$200.00 fee to have us maintain (and not retire) facilities where the service is inactive.

Fee for paying electric bill by credit/debit card began on January 1

Members paying their electric bill by credit or debit card will begin paying a \$5 per transaction fee in 2011. Credit and debit card payments are convenient for members but they cost the Cooperative money. The ever-increasing number of members making payments with credit cards has forced the Cooperative to add the \$5 fee to cover its labor of making the transaction and the cost the Cooperative has to pay to its credit card processing vendor. We encourage members to transition to Auto Pay, which automatically takes the amount due on the electric bill out of your checking or savings account the 28th of the month. You receive your bill mid-month and have two weeks to review it before the amount due is withdrawn. This is by far the most economical payment method for consumers and the Cooperative. It saves the customer from writing a check and they always know their payment will be in on time. It saves the Cooperative a lot of labor and expense compared to processing personal checks or credit/debit card payments.

Members can still make credit card payments up to \$500 anytime it is necessary, but the \$5.00 fee will be assessed to your account.

Manager's Message —

by Kris Ingenthron, General Manager
McLeod Cooperative Power Association

Are you prepared?

On behalf of all the Employees and Directors, I would like to extend our very best to you and yours for a happy, healthy New Year.

As I sit here writing this article, it is once again snowing. This reminds me of my childhood days filled with sledding, building snow forts, hoping school would be cancelled, and making a little money by shoveling driveways.

Being the manager of your Cooperative, my priorities are much different today: keeping the lights on, insuring the safety of our employees and weather preparedness for the Cooperative. Are you prepared if bad weather hit our area?

Sometimes winter storms are accompanied by strong winds, creating blizzard conditions with blinding wind-driven snow, severe drifting, and dangerous wind chill. Heavy accumulations of ice can bring down trees, electrical wires, and communication towers. Power can be disrupted for days while MCPA crews work to repair the extensive damage. Even small accumulations of ice may cause extreme hazards to motorists and pedestrians.

Heavy snow can immobilize an area and paralyze a city, stranding motorists, stopping the flow of supplies and disrupting emergency and medical services.

Accumulations of snow can collapse buildings and knock

down trees and power lines. In rural areas such as ours, homes and farms may be isolated for days, and unprotected livestock may be lost.

The cost of snow removal, repairing damages and loss of business can have large economic impacts on cities and towns.

My biggest concern for you, our members, is the potential loss of heat, power, and a shortage of supplies if storm conditions continue for more than a day.

Keep in mind that the loss of electricity does not always mean loss of phone service unless the only phone you have is portable. Having a plug-in phone allows you to communicate as long as telephone service is active.

The biggest challenge we face is the inability to respond to outages due to road closures and blizzard conditions. If you recall, the winter storm on December 11 had a huge impact across the area. Events were cancelled, businesses were closed, but the snow plows were suspended from plowing roads until weather conditions improved.

Fortunately, MCPA did not experience a single outage. If we had, I am certain the power would have been out for quite some time. First, we wouldn't have been able to respond due to road conditions and second, we would not have put our employees in a situation that



could possibly jeopardize their health and welfare.

Winter officially began on December 21 and we encourage you to stockpile the following supplies in the event a winter storm or power outage prevents you from leaving your home:

- Flashlights and extra batteries
- Battery-operated radio and extra batteries
- Emergency non-perishable foods that do not require refrigeration
- Non-electric can opener
- Bottled water
- One week supply of essential medicines
- Extra blankets and sleeping bags
- First aid kit and manual
- Fire extinguisher
- Emergency heating equipment, used properly

Although we have not experienced a situation of this magnitude so far, should it happen in the future, we will do our best to respond to outages as quickly as possible. We ask your patience during those times when our response time is delayed due to extreme weather conditions..

Once again, stay safe, stay healthy and best wishes for the upcoming year.

Kris Ingenthron

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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District 2
Dale Peters, Secretary-Treasurer
Brownton

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Roger Karstens, *Hutchinson*

District 4
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MCLEOD COOPERATIVE POWER ASSOCIATION NEWS

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Editor: Sue Pawelk

*The McLeod Coop Power News is the official member
publication of McLeod Coop Power Association and focuses*

*on our members, programs and events. All member story
ideas and comments are welcome.
Send to Sue Pawelk at the address above.*

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Fax: 320-864-4850**

Web site: www.mcleodcoop.com

Gopher State One Call 1-800-252-1166

Director applications must be returned by January 21

Please be reminded that any member from Districts 1, 2 or 3 interested in running for the board of directors in 2011 must complete a director application and return it to the office by January 21. The Nominating Committee will meet in early February.

Nominations by petition for director candidacy to be submitted by March 18

Cooperative members residing in Districts 1, 2, or 3 may petition to have their name added to the slate of candidates for the 2011 director election in their district. To have another name, in addition to the two candidate names selected by the nominating committee, on the ballot, 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 18, 2011.

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

District 1 includes:

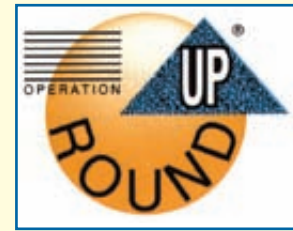
Winsted, Helen and Bergen Townships in McLeod County, and Victor Township in Wright County.

District 2 includes:

Hassen Valley, Sumter, and Penn Townships in McLeod County.

District 3 includes:

Acoma and Hutchinson Townships in McLeod County and Ellsworth and Collinwood Townships in Meeker County.



Operation Round Up® donation applications are being accepted until March 1

Community and civic groups, emergency responders and other non-profit 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 made available through the generous donations of electric cooperative members who round up their electric bills. Application forms are available by calling the Cooperative at 1-800-494-6272 ext. 502. Applications for funding must be completed and returned to the Cooperative by March 1, 2011.

Clarification on wind turbines that qualify for net-metering

Several members have reported activities where companies are marketing "modified" wind turbines with original nameplate capacities greater than 40.0 kW as MN net-metering qualified. The MN Office of Energy Security has confirmed that the MN net metering statute requires the system to have a nameplate capacity less than 40.0 kW. If some method has been employed to reduce the output of a larger nameplate turbine in an attempt to qualify it for MN net metering, then the nameplate capacity must state a value less than 40.0 kW and the modified equipment must bear a U.L. Mark.

Under U.L. guidelines, the "Authority Having Jurisdiction" (State Electrical Inspector) must determine if the modified equipment maintains compliance with the original U.L. Listing or if the equipment has obtained the necessary U.L. equivalent listing. A U.L. equivalent listing can be obtained via one of the following three options:

1. U.L. Field Verified – U.L. Field Engineering Services staff performs analysis outside of U.L. lab.
2. Independent Testing Lab – An independent lab certified by U.L. performs acceptance testing.
3. Independent Professional Engineer (P.E.) Evaluation – The P.E. evaluates the modifications and certifies that the equipment complies with the product's original U.L. Listing.
 - a. Can apply to a single unit or identical units with same model number and modification.
 - b. Evaluation good for one year only.

According to the Board of Electricity Office, this effort has been successfully completed for some equipment. UL addresses modification of UL Listed equipment on their website: A UL Listed product was modified in the field. Does this void the Listing? An authorized use of the UL Mark is the manufacturer's declaration that the product was manufactured in accordance with all applicable requirements, and was in compliance with those requirements when it was shipped from the factory.

When a UL Listed product is modified, retrofitted or altered in any way after it leaves the factory, it is not possible for UL to confirm that the product continues to meet the applicable certification safety requirements unless the field modifications are specifically investigated by UL. It is the responsibility of the Authority Having Jurisdiction to assess the acceptability of the modifications or to determine if the modifications are significant enough to require one of UL's Field Engineering Services staff to evaluate the modified product. UL can assist the AHJ in making this determination.

All systems also must be installed in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations and all applicable local, state, and federal codes and permits. Inverters must be UL listed or listed by another nationally recognized testing laboratory.

Why electric bills go up in the winter

Even 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 if you have an electric water heater, your electric bill will go up. 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.

What causes “blinks” in the electrical system?

When momentary power outages (also called “blinks”) occur, sometimes the only way we know it is when our appliance and alarm clocks start flashing “12:00.” If there are battery back-ups to these clocks, we may not even be aware there was a blink. However, whether we recognize it or not, blinks do occur on the electrical transmission system. In fact, transmission systems are designed to use blinks to keep electricity reliable to your home.

What are blinks and why do they occur?

Blinks occur when a breaker (think about your own electrical service panel at home) opens up, temporarily stopping the flow of electricity. This happens in an effort to clear a “short circuit” or “fault” on the electrical line that could otherwise create a full-blown outage. The breaker opens and shuts again quickly to try to remove the fault from the line, causing a “blink.” While these blinks can be annoying, especially if you have to reset all your clocks, answering machine, etc., they go a long way to protecting electrical service to your home or business.

A fault is a sudden burst of electricity on the line that brings electricity to you. This burst could be caused by a tree branch touching the line, a lightning strike, or broken wire, or an animal. Often, when the circuit breaker opens, it is able to clear the fault. If it doesn't clear the first time, the breaker is designed to open and close up to three



more times in an attempt to clear the problem. If it can't clear it, the breaker will stay open and an outage has occurred. This could affect hundreds of homes if the fault occurs on a line fed by a substation or DC transmission line. When this happens, please find your location number and call the Cooperative to report the outage. We will dispatch a crew to find and fix the problem as quickly as possible. **Having your location number handy will considerably speed this process along.**

Your Cooperative's aggressive safety and reliability program has gone a long way to reducing the number of blinks and outages that occur. But there are things that you can do to minimize blinks and the resulting annoyance.

Tree trimming

The Cooperative's tree trimming program is always vigilant about removing this common cause of blinks and outages. Please call the Co-op if you see trees that could interfere with transmission lines, and cooperate with personnel trimming trees in your area. The power you save may be your own.

Electronics

While you will probably still have to reset the clocks on your microwave, refrigerator or oven, you can reduce the annoyance of blinks by purchasing alarms clocks, an answering machine and other household clocks that allow battery back-ups that will keep the time current during blinks.

If a blink occurs while you're using your computer, data loss could occur. We recommend you purchase and plug your computer into an uninterruptible power supply (UPS). This will protect the work you are currently doing in the case of any power interruption during a blink or even a lightning storm.

If you have questions about blinks or any other feature of your electrical supply, don't hesitate to call our knowledgeable and professional Customer Service Representatives for assistance.

Source: Scott Turner of JD Engineering, NRECA

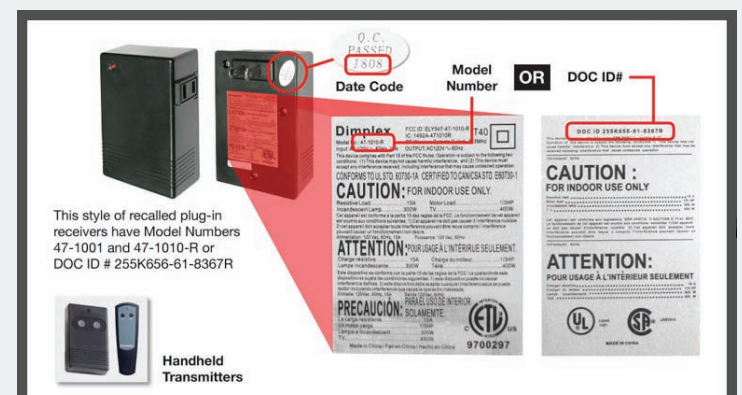
Dimplex® recall of remote controls still in effect

It's the time of year when electric fireplaces are being used once again to create extra heat and ambiance in homes across the country. If you own a Dimplex electric fireplace, you should be aware of a recall that was issued last spring 2010. In cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Dimplex North America Limited is announcing a voluntary recall and replacement program for approximately 700,000 plug-in remote control receivers included with certain Dimplex, Electraflame, Symphony, Optiflame, Electralog and Charmglow branded electric fireplaces, stoves and fireplace inserts. Dimplex consumers affected by this program will receive a replacement plug-in remote control kit at no cost for each recalled plug-in receiver.

The models in question were sold between 1998 and 2008. The recall includes remote control kits subsequently replaced under warranty. In some instances, the plug-in remote control receiver can overheat, posing a fire hazard. Dimplex does not have any

reports of injury, but does have multiple reported incidents with damage that extends beyond the failure mode of the product. They are choosing to act with an abundance of caution. If you believe you have the affected plug-in remote control receiver, please do not use it. Unplug the receiver from the electrical outlet, unplug the fireplace from the receiver and dispose of the receiver (after taking note of the model number and date code as illustrated). You may still safely operate your fireplace or stove product manually by plugging it directly to the electrical outlet. This voluntary recall does not in any way affect the safe operation of the electric fireplace or stove when connected without the use of the plug-in remote control receiver.

Submitting a claim: Visit their website at www.recall.dimplex.com to see a complete list of products that include a recalled plug-in control, to submit a claim and request a replacement plug-in remote control kit at no cost. Or call Dimplex toll-free 24 hours a day at 866-673-9880.





Reliable transmission means reliable electricity for you

during the recession, an increasing number of home electronics and expanding home sizes have pushed electricity use considerably higher than it was during the last major transmission line upgrade in the Upper Midwest 30 years ago.

Transmission expansion projects, such as CapX2020, will help ensure Minnesota utilities have the transmission capacity they need to deliver the growing amount of electricity consumers need.

CapX2020 is a joint initiative of 11 transmission-owning utilities in Minnesota and the surrounding region to expand the electric transmission grid to ensure continued reliable and affordable service. Planning studies show that customer demand for electricity will increase 4,000 to 6,000 megawatts (MW) by 2020. The new transmission lines will be built in phases designed to meet this increasing demand as well as to support renewable energy expansion.

All electricity customers in Minnesota and the surrounding region will benefit from a more robust and reliable electric transmission system. CapX2020 will address potentially serious local reliability issues in Rochester, St. Cloud, La Crosse and the Alexandria area. Reliable and affordable electricity is the backbone to a robust economy and vibrant community. The expansion of the renewable energy industry in Minnesota will also benefit the entire state and region.

The proposed CapX2020 transmission lines will help begin to meet Minnesota's Renewable Energy Standard (RES), which requires utilities to deliver 25 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2025 (Xcel Energy is mandated to deliver 30 percent by 2020, with 25 percent from wind). Most of that energy comes from wind turbines.

To see the source of this information and to learn more about the CapX2020 project, go to: www.capx2020.com

Your Cooperative works hard to deliver reliable electricity to our members. However, the investment in power lines and substations is worthless if Great River Energy does not have a dependable transmission system to deliver electricity from power sources throughout the region to your Co-op's substations.

Electricity moves at the speed of light and generally cannot be stored. It must be moved to consumers the moment it is purchased, and Great River Energy must carefully monitor the transmission system 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Great River Energy recently went an entire month without a single transmission outage lasting more than one minute; an impressive accomplishment considering Great River Energy owns nearly 4,500 miles of transmission line.

Maintaining reliability

Continuing to provide reliable electric service requires building more transmission lines to meet the growing demand for power. Despite decreased electricity use

INDUSTRY News

Great River Energy wins award for "Project of the Year"

Power Engineering magazine recognized the 2010 Projects of the Year Award finalists and announced the winners. This year's Projects of the Year Award winners and honorable mentions produced facilities and/or technologies that ushered in breakthrough solutions in four categories: coal-fired, gas-fired, nuclear and renewable/sustainable.

Best Coal-fired Projects: Project of the Year: Great River Energy's DryFining process, Underwood, N.D. After 13 years of research and development in an effort to find a more affordable way to control emissions, the Coal Creek Station, a 1,200 MW plant near Underwood, N.D., implemented its DryFining process in December 2009. The 2010 Best Coal-fired project is operated by Great River Energy, which developed this technology in-house to improve fuel quality by simultaneously drying and refining low-rank coal. The DryFining technology integrates the use of waste heat in place of primary fuel to dry lignite without volatilization. The project is also unique in its continuous segregation of particles bearing the highest concentrations of pyritic sulfur and mercury and the complete integration within the existing plant.

The DryFining system is providing financial and operational advantages to the Coal Creek Station in comparison to alternative emissions control equipment. DryFining has a lower initial cost of installation and reduces expenses by more than \$20 million annually in reduced fuel, auxiliary power and other operations and maintenance costs.

-Penn Energy

Heartland Security

2009 DEALER OF THE YEAR FOR WESTERN U.S. SECURITY PRO

McLeod COOPERATIVE POWER

Meeker Cooperative Light and Power Association

Yes dear, I'm CERTAIN everything is fine at home.

Even when you're not there, protect your home and family against:

- Vandalism & burglars
- Smoke damage & fire
- Frozen pipes
- Flooded basement
- Sump pump failure
- Carbon monoxide poisoning
- Power failure
- And more...

Purchase a new Heartland Security System by January 31 and receive three months of FREE monitoring.

(Certain restrictions apply; cannot be combined with other offers.)

Snowmobilers

Beware of Hazards!
Respect property-owner rights!



As snowmobiling has become more popular, the number of accidents have increased. Very few accidents occur on Minnesota's trail system. Most accidents occur along roads and ditches. Obstacles encountered along roads

and other cleared rights of way can be very dangerous, especially in low-visibility conditions.

McLeod Cooperative Power has guy wires, metal enclosures, and pedestals installed on hundreds of miles of rights of way. When snowmobiling, be aware of these obstacles. Guy wires need special attention as they can be difficult to see.

Some snowmobilers are mistaking the private property where electric transmission lines are located for snowmobile trails. Great River Energy, Xcel and other utilities have been granted easements to build and maintain lines in these cleared areas, but the land still belongs to the landowner. Be sure to check with the landowners before snowmobiling on their property.

Enjoy snowmobiling in Minnesota but keep safety in mind. Slow down, don't drink, and stay alert for obstacles.

Expect electric bills to be higher than last month

Members should expect higher electric bills this month. Last month most members received capital credit payments applied to their electric bills, reducing the total amount due by most patrons. In January, electric bills will be back to normal winter use, with no extra credits applied. Plus, December of 2010 was much colder than average. This increases electric use at most member's homes and farms. Please call the office if you have any questions. Or go to the Co-op's web site and sign up for MyMeter. You can view how many kilowatts you used each day in December and compare it to other months or years.

Power Line Worker Scholarships Offered

Students accepted into one of Minnesota's three power line technology programs for the 2011-12 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, 2011.



Dryer Vent Cleaning is an important chore to occasionally take care of

Your dryer is the number one source of fire in the home. Fires originate most frequently from two places: dryer venting and the lint trap. In order to prevent dangerous lint build-up in your dryer, read and follow these tips:

Lint is created in the dryer as water is removed from clothes during the drying process. This lint will build up in crevices deep down inside the lint filter trap, and all along the dryer vent hose.

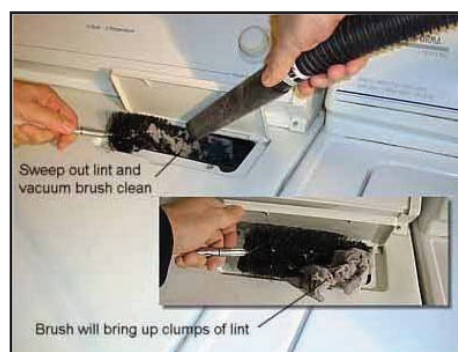
Excessive lint build up occurs slowly and gradually. You don't realize it is happening. You think that by cleaning out the lint filter after each use you are doing your job and maintaining the dryer. This is not enough.

If you notice any of these warning signs, take action immediately to prevent a potentially dangerous situation:

- Clothes take longer and longer to dry
- Clothes don't fully dry
- Clothes are hotter than normal at the end of the drying cycle
- The outside of dryer gets very hot
- The outside exhaust vent flapper does not open very much indicating

- low exhaust velocity
- Laundry room becomes more humid than it is usually
- Burnt smell is evident in the laundry room.

Vacuum Lint Trap Housing Cavity



Use Lint Brush to Dig Out Lint Trapped in the Housing and Vacuum Away Any Lint

© 2009 Home-Cost.com

After cleaning the lint trap, the next area you want to clean is the lint trap housing cavity; the cavity from which you pulled the screen out. You'll need the long flexible fiberglass handle of a brush kit to get into this area.

- Extend the brush all the way into the bottom of the cavity
- Using a gentle and slight twisting motion, pull out the brush to expose the clumps of lint it has removed
- Using a household vacuum cleaner

- or shop vacuum, vacuum the brush head clean of any lint
- Repeat this process until there is no more lint that can be removed from the cavity.

Disconnect Sections of Dryer Vent.

Next, disconnect the various sections of the dryer ducting to expose the inside lint for removal.



Some duct cleaning products and approaches try and clean this area from the outside of the home with all of the ducting intact, but if the ducting is accessible, why go through the effort and expense of extremely long-shafted brushes and bags with no guarantee you'll get all the lint? If you just disconnect the vent sections,

you'll be able to easily and properly clean each section and put it back together correctly.

To properly disassemble and reassemble the duct sections, proceed as follows:

- Unplug the dryer
- Turn off the gas valve at the dryer (if it is a gas dryer)
- Disconnect the duct joint closest to the dryer
- Gently pull the dryer away from the wall
- Disconnect the remaining sections of dryer duct
- Clean out each section using a brush and vacuum
- Once all pipes are clean, reassemble them in order
- Push the dryer back to the wall and reconnect the vent pipe to the back of the dryer
- Turn gas back on if it is a gas dryer. Plug dryer back into outlet.

Not only will these steps protect your home and appliances from a potential fire, but keeping your dryer clean of lint also will help your dryer function more efficiently, saving you money with each and every use.

America's Cooperative Electric Utilities

The Nation's Consumer Owned Electric Utility Network

Electric cooperatives are an integral part of the \$364 billion U.S. electric utility industry. They play a critical role in our nation's economy and in local communities.

Electric cooperatives are:

- ✓ private independent electric utility businesses
- ✓ owned by the consumers they serve
- ✓ incorporated under the laws of the states in which they operate
- ✓ established to provide at-cost electric service
- ✓ governed by a board of directors elected from the membership, which sets policies and procedures that are implemented by the cooperatives' professional staff

Facts at a Glance

- ✓ Co-ops serve 42 million people in 47 states
- ✓ 18 million businesses, homes, schools, churches, farms, irrigation systems, and other establishments in 2,500 of 3,141 counties in the U.S. are cooperatives
- ✓ 12 percent of the nation's population are customers of rural electric co-ops

To perform their mission, electric cooperatives:

- ✓ own assets worth \$112 billion (distribution and G&T co-ops combined)
- ✓ own and maintain 2.5 million miles, or 42%, of the nation's electric distribution lines, covering three quarters of the nation's landmass
- ✓ employ 70,000 people in the U.S.
- ✓ retire \$545 million in capital credits annually
- ✓ pay \$1.4 billion in state and local taxes

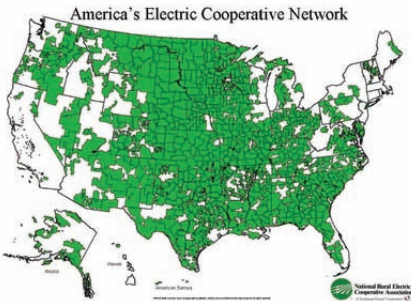
Compared with other electric utilities:

- ✓ Co-ops serve an average of 7 consumers per mile of line and collect annual revenue of approximately \$10,565 per mile of line
- ✓ Investor-owned utilities average 35 customers per mile of line and collect \$62,665 per mile of line
- ✓ Publicly-owned utilities, or municipals, average 46.6 consumers and collect \$86,302 per mile of line

Electric Utility Comparisons (2008 EIA data)

	Investor-Owned	Publicly Owned	Cooperatives	Total
Total Revenue (billions)	\$277	\$50	\$37	\$364
Number of Organizations	220	2,000	930	3,150
Number of Total Customers	104 m	21 m	18 m	143 m
Size (median number of customers)	400,000	2,000	12,500	

	Investor-Owned	Publicly Owned	Cooperatives	Total
Miles of Distribution Line.....	50%	7%	43%	
Customers per mile of line (density).....	35	47	7	34
Revenue per mile of line	\$62,665	\$86,302	\$10,565	\$60,827
Distribution plant per Customer	\$2,229	\$2,309	\$2,845	\$2,362



Source Notes: Energy Information Administration (EIA) Electric Sales, Revenue, and Price 2008.
http://www.eia.doe.gov/cneaf/electricity/esr/esr_sum.html "Total retail revenues in 2008 were \$363.65 billion"
Investor-Owned statistics includes IOU affiliates engaged in competitive retail markets; sales data does not add to total because sales from federally owned utilities not shown. The number of cooperatives, 864 distribution systems and 66 G&Ts, includes a small number of rural public power districts considered part of the rural electric network. Density and distribution plant per customer data is 2003. Co-op financial data is from the 2007 RUS Form 7 (and CFC Form 7, if available).
EIA: Energy Information Administration (a part of DOE), Washington, DC.
RUS: Rural Utilities Service (a part of USDA), Washington, DC.
CFC: Cooperative Finance Corporation, Herndon, VA.
Posted to NRECA.coop at: https://www.cooperative.com/library/coopfacts/data/facts.htm

Load Management control history for Nov. 1 through Dec 29

Dual Fuel may be controlled for up to 400 hours per heating season. So far this season Dual Fuel has been controlled for 44 hours. Loads will be controlled for system capacity peak, billing peak or because of expensive market prices for energy in an effort to keep member's cost of power as low as possible.

Date	Program Type	Start	Stop	Hours
12/15/2010	Interruptible Water Heating	16:00	22:00	6
12/14/2010	South Dual Fuel	16:30	21:30	5
12/14/2010	Interruptible Water Heating	16:00	22:00	6
12/13/2010	South Dual Fuel	16:30	21:30	5
12/13/2010	Interruptible Water Heating	16:00	22:00	6
12/07/2010	South Dual Fuel	16:30	21:30	5
12/07/2010	Interruptible Water Heating	16:00	22:00	6
12/06/2010	South Dual Fuel	16:30	21:30	5
12/06/2010	Interruptible Water Heating	16:00	22:00	6
12/02/2010	South Dual Fuel	16:30	21:30	5
12/02/2010	Interruptible Water Heating	16:00	22:00	6
12/01/2010	South Dual Fuel	16:30	21:30	5
12/01/2010	Interruptible Water Heating	16:00	22:00	6
11/30/2010	Interruptible Water Heating	16:00	22:00	6
11/30/2010	South Dual Fuel	16:30	21:30	5
11/23/2010	Interruptible Water Heating	16:00	22:00	6
11/23/2010	South Dual Fuel	16:30	21:30	5
11/22/2010	South Dual Fuel	16:30	20:30	4
11/22/2010	Interruptible Water Heating	16:00	21:00	5

Changes to ENERGY STAR rebate program for 2011

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.

There will be no rebates in 2011 for dishwashers, clothes washers, or dehumidifiers. Refrigerator/freezer units will require recycling of the old unit to qualify for rebates.

2011 Rebates

Ground Source Heat Pumps (controlled or uncontrolled)	
Residential	\$400/ton
Commercial	\$400/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	
Uncontrolled electric water heater going on the Storage Water Heating	
with high efficiency water heater*	\$200
New construction Storage Water Heating*	
\$100	
4 hour peak shave to Storage Water Heating*	
\$100	
Heat pump water heater - new construction	
\$100	
Heat pump water heater replacing non-controlled electric	
\$200	
ENERGY STAR Refrigerator with recycling of old unit	
\$75	
ENERGY STAR Freezer with recycling of old unit	
\$75	

*(Marathon or equivalent energy rated heater)

State Energy Policies Should Reflect Market Realities



By Mark Glaess, Manager
Minnesota Rural Electric
Association

In 2007, the Minnesota Legislature passed a measure requiring every electric utility, including your electric Cooperative, to buy more and more renewable energy. In 2010, cooperatives were required to produce 7 percent of the energy sold to you from renewable sources. Most of that came from wind turbines. By 2025, every fourth kilowatt-hour (kWh) sold to you will have to come from a renewable source. Again, most of that will be generated by the wind. The idea behind one of the nation's most ambitious clean energy mandates was to tap into Minnesota's ample wind resources and provide additional revenues and tax receipts to particularly gusty rural areas of the state. One of the key selling points was that this would create a load of green jobs. All-in-all, it was hard to argue with the intentions.

In 2009, Minnesota utilities produced 3,441,000,000 kWh by capturing the wind. On average, utilities paid 4.5 cents for each kWh. This cost would be much higher if not for major Federal tax subsidies for wind energy. Since the wind tends to blow somewhat more at night when it's not all that useful, cooperatives have had to

sell much of their wind energy on the open market.

Last year, the market only paid an average of 2.7 cents for each kWh produced by wind. Sometimes there was absolutely no market for the wind and the utility had to pay another utility to take those renewable kWh off their hands.

The loss of 1.8 cents per kWh spread over 3.4 billion kWh cost Minnesotans some \$62 million in 2009. Minnkota Power, which provides electricity to the relatively depressed northwest corner of the state, was forced to increase rates by 1/2 cent for every kilowatt sold. The biggest driver for those losses is the shrinking demand for electricity across the U.S. The economy — post 2007 — has cratered. Utilities have seen double digit decreases in electric consumption.

When legislators and the Pawlenty Administration were putting together the 2007 Renewable Energy Standard, they didn't factor in a depressed economy. They expected the market to easily absorb all of the new, greener electricity. They understood that utilities would be paying more for these new energy resources, but believed that increasing demand from a growing economy would help offset those increased costs. That hasn't happened. Instead, utilities are paying a premium for new wind resources and selling it at a dramatic loss. In 2010, that market imbalance is on track to cost Minnesotans well over \$100 million. It's also making it

harder for utilities to pay for new pollution-control technology for existing plants or invest in greater efficiency.

At a time when we need to be focusing on creating jobs and expanding business opportunities, the unanticipated extra cost of new renewable energy sources is acting as a drag on the economy. Right now, the state's unemployment rate is 7.1. The green jobs heralded by the 2007 renewable mandate? They haven't materialized — at least not at the level champions of the legislation said they'd reach.

Meanwhile, the increase in electric rates for additional energy we don't need and can't sell is adding to the cost of hard-pressed manufacturing plants and taking a bigger and bigger share of already-strained family budgets. Laws with good intentions, unfortunately, all too often ignore economic conditions. The state's policy makers need to ensure that "good" energy policy also be grounded in market realities and sound economics. Minnesota's electric cooperatives are committed to increasing the use of clean, renewable energy, particularly if it benefits hard-pressed rural areas of the state. However, we're also committed to keeping electricity both affordable and reliable. We need state energy policy makers to be partners in all three goals, providing us with the flexibility and tools to accomplish the challenges we face in the most efficient and cost-effective way possible.

Eco-Site opens in Watertown

The Eco-Site building is located at 676 Industrial Blvd, near the intersection of Hwy. 25 and Carver Co. Road 122.

Watertown's Douglas Kugler Eco-Site, the first facility to locate in Watertown's new industrial park just off County Road 122, celebrated its grand opening Wednesday, Dec. 8.

The \$1.3 million, 13,300 square-foot facility offers a variety of recycling services, including recycling of automotive and household batteries, printer cartridges, cooking oil, holiday lights, plastic bags and shrink wrap, paper and cardboard, glass and cans, plastic bottles with a 1 or 2, residential fluorescent bulbs, used motor oil, filters and anti-freeze, CPUs and laptops, at no charge. Items that consumers must pay to recycle are: appliances, bicycles, electronics, lawnmowers, tires and business fluorescent bulbs.

Designed to be a more convenient recycling site for Carver County residents living in the western part of the county, the Eco-Site also will accept recycling from non-residents except on special hazardous waste collection days. The site has a Re-Use Room where household paints, cleaners, etc. that are still usable can be picked up free of charge for your own use. Call the Eco-Site at 952-955-1130 for more detailed info and pricing, or go to their website at www.athc.org.

The collaboration between Adult Training and Habilitation (ATHC), owners of the business, and

Carver County Environmental Services, made this project a reality. They had help from the Otto Bremer Foundation which provided a \$75,000 grant, the Watertown Economic Development Authority which provided a \$25,000 grant and the Carver County EDA which provided a \$49,500 grant. Financing for the building project was through Citizen's Bank & Trust in Hutchinson and McLeod Cooperative Power provided low interest gap financing via its economic development revolving loan fund. ATHC board member and MCPA member Richard Schimmel was the Eco-Site project manager. Schimmel and ATHC director Jason Telander were responsible for bringing this whole project together and coordinating the building of this facility. The entire project came together to create 20-25 jobs for people with disabilities in the Watertown area plus some supervisor/training positions. Telander shared that he is excited about signing the paychecks for these employees. "You should see the joy on their faces when they buy things with the paychecks they have earned," said Telander.

The site is named after Douglas Kugler, a teacher who was committed to the environment and helped create ecology clubs in Mazeppa and Watertown-Mayer. ATHC has contracts to recycle for the State of MN Office Buildings, many convenience stores, and at several Minnesota festivals.



Recycling trucks can pull into the facility and unload their recyclable products. They are emptied into this machine that runs them past the employees sorting materials. At the grand opening area residents were able to tour the facility and watch the recycling process.



Employees of ATHC sort the different types of recyclables as they move on the conveyor line in front of them. Each person is responsible for pulling off a different type of product — plastic, glass, etc. Only the metal pop cans continue on through to a machine that crushes the metal.