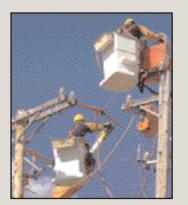


Inside this issue...



Lineman retires after 38 years



Lineman scholarships available



Expensive heaters with false advertising

Official publication of



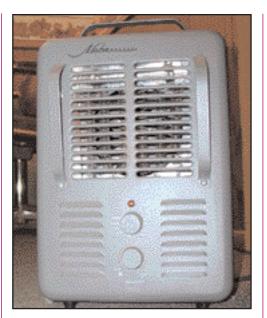
www.mcleodcoop.com

Please do not plug in electric space heaters during load control times

Please do not plug in electric space heaters during load control times.

The load management program is a good thing to have around. The program helps keep electric rates low for all members and provides a half priced heating rate for members who participate in the program.

The program could lose much of its value, however, if electric space heaters are used during high-demand times. During load management control times, our power supplier is able to reduce electric load on the regional power system and thereby avoid buying higher cost supplemental power from the wholesale market. This is how we are able to offer a reduced off-peak rate. Plugging in electric space heaters during the times our billing peaks are established totally defeats the load management concept. It drives up the cost of power for all McLeod



Cooperative Power members. The practice of plugging in space heaters and creating a demand during peak load conditions will inevitably cause a rate increase to all of our members. Control times occur most frequently between 4 p.m. and 10 p.m. on weekday

evenings, although they can happen anytime. The very cold nights in December, January, and February are often when our system peaks.

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U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #60
HUTCHINSON, M

Members can go to the Cooperative's web site www.mcleodcoop.com at any time to check to see if load control is scheduled for that day. By the afternoon, specific control hours will be listed. Your help in reducing — not increasing — electric demand during control times will be greatly appreciated!

To help conserve energy during peak hours, all peak shave water heaters will be controlled Monday through Friday evenings between 5 p.m. and 10 p.m. (excluding holidays) during December, January and February.

\$568,000 in capital credits to be distributed

embers of McLeod
Cooperative Power
Association (MCPA) may
notice lower electric bills in
December. A total of \$568,000 is
being distributed this month in capital
credit refunds. This amount includes
all remaining capital credits from
1989 and 20 percent of operating
margins allocated from 2007.

Capital credits are being applied to active electric accounts and will show as a line item credit on each bill that is supposed to receive a refund. Former members who no longer have an active electric account will be mailed their refund in the form of a check in December.



cLeod Cooperative will be offering cider, coffee and cookies for any members stopping in to pay a bill or do business with us Wednesday, December 17 or Thursday, December 18. It is just our way of sharing the joy of the Christmas season with our members.

2009 scenic calendars will be available throughout the month of December, while supplies last.

Agriculture



Round up your electric bill to the nearest dollar

And do good things in your community through Operation Round Up

he more MCPA members who choose to round up their electric bills, the more charitable groups and projects can be helped. By rounding your bill up to the nearest dollar, you will be donating between \$0 and \$11.98 per year. The average donation is \$6.00 per year.

So, we are calling all members (who have not already signed up) to join Operation Round Up. Just complete the box below and mail to the Cooperative. You may send it along with your electric payment.

Local charitable organizations with projects planned for 2009 may apply for funds at this time. Applications are accepted through March 1, 2009, and our volunteer Operation Round Up Trust Board will select those projects to receive funding before the annual meeting in April. Call the Cooperative for an application form.

If you want to sign up to participate in the Operation Round-Up Program:					
 Check box below Complete and sign card Return with electric bill We will take care of the rest 					
Yes, I would like to participate in the program. I give MCPA my permission to round up my electric bill (account # shown below) to the nearest dollar each month, as my contribution to the McLeod Cooperative Power Trust.					
Account #					
Location #					
Print Name					
Date					
0:					

Joe Cuchna hangs up his climbing hooks after 38 years



ine Foreman Joe Cuchna has decided that 38 years of pole climbing and line work is sufficient. He will be retiring in the near future.

loe started with McLeod Cooperative Power as an apprentice lineman back in 1970. He attained journeyman status in 1974, and in November of 1999

was promoted to line foreman. Joe has been a devoted employee for many years, not just working as a lineman, but also mentoring younger employees and teaching safety programs in the local schools.

We appreciate Joe's many years of service and wish him the best in his retirement. He and his wife reside in Glencoe and are making plans for what they will do with their added free time.

McLeod Cooperative Power wishes you and your family a blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Our offices will be closed **Wednesday**, December 24, Thursday, December 25, and Thursday, January 1, so our employees may spend the holidays with their families. For outages or electrical emergencies call 1-800-927-5685. For holiday, weekend and evening DIRECTV service call 1-800-927-5414.

PURPA policy information available upon request

The Public Utilities Regulatory Act of 1978 states that McLeod Cooperative is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from cogenerators and small power producers. McLeod Cooperative Power Association will provide information to all interested persons free of charge upon request. Any disputes over interconnection, sales and purchases are subject to resolution by the Public Utilities Commission upon complaint. If any member has questions regarding PURPA policies, contact McLeod Cooperative Power Association, per Rule 7835.4600.

Board of **D**irectors

District 1

Oria Brinkmeier, Lester Prairie

District 2

Dale Peters, Brownton

District 3

Roger Karstens, Hutchinson

District 4

Curtis Rossow, Buffalo Lake

District 5

Allan Duesterhoeft, Hutchinson

District 6 Lester Ranzau,

Vice-President, Glencoe

District 7

Bill Polchow, Silver Lake

District 8 Doug Kirtz,

President, Hector

District 9

Gerald Roepke, 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

MCPA Director Candidate Application

The undersigned, a member of McLeod Cooperative Power Association, hereby applies as a nominee for director of McLeod Cooperative Power Association from ___ and requests that my name be considered by the Nominating Committee to be placed on the ballot for the next election for director from said district to be held at the next annual meeting, April 15,

I certify that my account is current and I am a member in good standing with McLeod Cooperative Power Association from

I certify that I am a resident of District
and am receiving electric energy from McLeod
Cooperative Power Association

I certify that I am not in a competing business with McLeod Cooperative Power Association.

If elected director, I agree to attend as many meetings of the Board of Directors as possible and to abide by the Articles of Incorporation and By-laws and Policies of McLeod Cooperative Power Association.

Date	 	
C:		
Signature:		

Volunteers needed for nominating committee

o elect directors in Districts 4, 5, and 6 at the 2009 Annual meeting, we need members from those districts to serve on the Nominating Committee. Nominating Committee members participate in the election process by selecting director candidates and submitting their names to the Board for approval. They also assist with collecting and counting ballots at the Annual Meeting. Volunteers are needed from the following townships:

District 4 includes: Boon Lake, Preston Lake, Brookfield, Hector, Osceola, and a portion of Kingman Township, all in Renville County, and a portion of East Lake Lillian Township in Kandiyohi County, served by Mcleod Co-op Power.

District 5 includes: Lynn, Collins, and Round Grove Townships in McLeod County.

District 6 includes: New Auburn, Green Isle, Arlington, Dryden and Transit Townships in Sibley County.

Call McLeod Cooperative Power if you are willing to volunteer for the 2009 Nominating Committee. The Annual Meeting is planned for April 15, 2009.

What makes a good director?

t McLeod Cooperative Power we believe that our Board of Directors comprises a pillar connection with our membership and the community at large. Besides meeting the legal requirements for Director nomination, we are seeking individuals who hold some important personal characteristics. We've summarized these attributes below.

Possess a sincere interest in preserving the strength of the Cooperative's operations and maintaining a productive relationship with its consumer-members. McLeod Cooperative Power has assets of about \$25 million, employs 33 people and is responsible for providing quality electric service to more than 6,000 sites, as well as a variety of ancillary services. Our electric distribution system serves a diverse membership consisting of residences, farms, businesses and industries. While representing all members of the district, Directors must work with each other to ensure equitable treatment to all members across the entire distribution system.

Be willing and available to fully participate in the business activities of the Cooperative. Attendance is expected at all scheduled Board of Directors meetings. In addition, from time to time, Directors will be called upon to represent the Cooperative at other meetings and events where their presence is deemed to be beneficial to the Cooperative.

Remain accessible to the members whom they represent. Since the Directors are elected from and by the Cooperative's membership, it is important that they work to maintain open lines of communication with their constituents. They should also strive to be knowledgeable about trends and circumstances that may impact the people and communities of central Minnesota.

Be enthusiastic. During these times of accelerated change, we look for proactive, resourceful and inspired leadership.

Give safety for Christmas

the perfect gift for the elderly parent who has everything else

s winter settles in and the holidays approach, have you thought about your parents living at home by themselves during the long winter season? How about the neighbors or other family members who have a hard time getting around or have some medical problems and need someone to check on them often?

McLeod Cooperative Power can help. One of the many services we have to offer you is the MainStreet Messenger. The MainStreet Messenger is a 24-hour emergency response system which offers assistance by simply pushing a button.

Whenever the alert key on a special telephone or the button on a cordless pendant is pressed, the phone automatically dials a preprogrammed help number at the monitoring center.

Once the connection is made, the speaker phone is automatically activated to allow hands-free, two-way voice communication. The monitoring center then contacts predetermined numbers, such as family member, neighbor, or 911, to let them know that help is needed while still staying on the line with the individual who needs help.

The cordless emergency response pendant is ideal for those who live alone and for people with mobility problems. In a crisis or any situation requiring immediate action, pressing the button on the pendant will initiate the emergency help sequence. In addition, incoming calls can be answered from across the room by the cordless pendant.

For a low monthly cost, you may have this easy-to-use security telephone system in your home or that of a family member. Call 1-800-494-6272 for more information.



isps of smoke
were rising from
his chest when

Maria Worth came upon her injured son. Shawn Miller was unconscious and badly burned. He had been hanging holiday lights in the trees that lined her yard. As he tossed the lights up into the trees, 7200 volts of electricity had entered his body, traveling from the overhead power lines through his strand of lights.

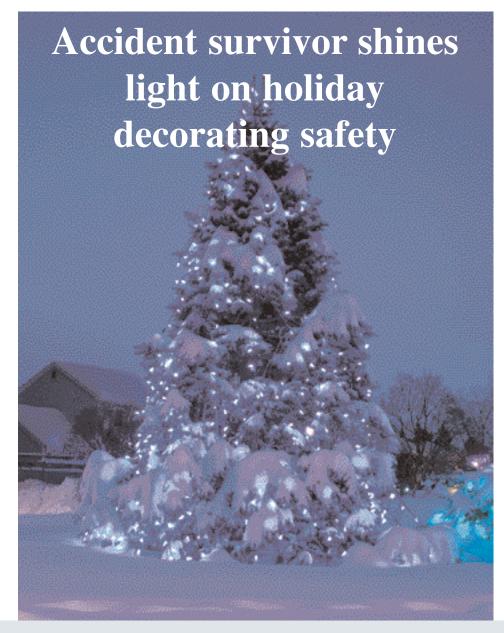
Miller had to be revived three times and ultimately, survived the tremendous shock. He lost his left hand and a finger on his right hand, suffering 27 exit wounds throughout his body. Dozens of surgeries and skin grafts later, he is a walking miracle who wants to offer others the gift of electrical safety awareness for the holiday season. He has joined forces with Safe Electricity's Teach Learn Care TLC campaign to get the word out about the importance of electrical safety.

"Power lines were the last thing on my mind that day," said Miller. "I was just hanging Christmas lights at my Mom's house like I do every year, only this time, I was decorating a new area, the trees that lined the front of the yard."

"I'm lucky to be alive. I want everyone to be careful, be aware of power lines."

Miller asks people to spend time making themselves aware of their surroundings before working with or around items that use electricity, indoors and out.

Miller and his family gathered at his Indiana home to record interviews for Teach Learn Care public service announcements, and he had



Miller and Safe Electricity encourage everyone to follow these guidelines as they prepare for holiday and seasonal celebrations this year:

- Never throw holiday lights or other decorations into trees near power lines.
- Use only lights that have been safety tested and have the UL label.
- Before use, check each light string for broken sockets, frayed cords, or faulty plugs. Replace damaged strings. Always unplug light strings while replacing bulbs.
- Don't string together more than three standard-size sets of lights.
- Make sure extension cords are in good condition, are UL-approved and rated to carry the electrical load you will connect to them.
- Match plugs with outlets. Don't force a 3-pronged plug into a 2-pronged outlet or extension cord.
- Do not overload outlets. Use surge protector strips if multiple outlets are needed.

- Keep electric cords away from hightraffic areas, and don't run them through doorways, or hide them under rugs or carpets.
- Outdoors, use only lights, cords, animated displays and decorations rated for outdoor use. Cords should be plugged into outlets equipped with GFCIs. Use a portable GFCI if your outdoor outlets are not equipped with them.
- Do not staple or nail through light strings or electrical cords, or attach cords to utility poles
- Don't let children or pets play with light strings or electrical decorations.
- Place fresh-cut trees away from heat sources such as heat registers, fireplaces, radiators and televisions; and water frequently.
- Always unplug lights before going to bed or leaving your home.

some emotional moments as he recalled the aftermath of the accident and all his family has been through since that day. But his resolve and resiliency was obvious as he spoke candidly about what he has learned from this tragedy.

"After something life-changing happens, you become more interested and learn much more," Miller said. "Had I known more before this happened, I might still have two hands and the job I loved. I have to find ways to move on with my life and help people learn from what has happened to me. Safe Electricity is helping me help others."

He and his mother Maria spoke about what they wanted the public to know, and she hopes people will take a life-saving lesson from Shawn's ordeal. "Teach the people you love, teach your children to stay away from overhead power lines and the trees that are near them", said Maria. "Treat every power line as if it is live and energized, because you don't want your family to go through what ours has."

"Shawn Miller has a lot to teach us about electrical safety and we are grateful he is sharing his story through our Teach Learn Care TLC campaign," says Molly Hall, Executive Director of Safe Electricity. "We want people to learn from his tragic experience and care enough to share it with those they love."

For more information on electrical safety and to learn more about Shawn's compelling story visit www.SafeElectricity.org.

Safe Electricity is an electrical safety public awareness program supported by a coalition of hundreds of organizations, including electric utilities such as Meeker Cooperative Light & Power Assn. and McLeod Cooperative Power, educators and other entities committed to promoting the safe use of electricity.

Heating cost outlook — electricity more stable than other fuel options

he U.S. Energy Information Administration recently released its annual Winter Fuels Outlook. This report provides national price forecasts for the winter heating season (November through March) for utilities such as natural gas, heating oil, and

electricity, as well as transportation fuels. These forecasts can provide helpful insight in preparing for the heating season and when planning your energy budget for next year.

Below are some highlights from this year's report.

 Spot prices for natural gas are expected to show noticeable

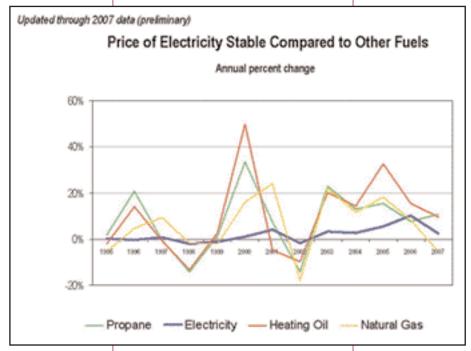
increases over winter 2008 levels. The Henry Hub in Louisiana is the major pricing point for natural gas sold for distribution. Henry Hub spot prices for November-March are projected to average \$9.07 per thousand cubic feet (tcf). This is a 79 cent increase over last winter's average of \$8.28 per tcf.

· Natural gas retail prices to consumers are also forecast to increase significantly. Households that heat with natural gas are expected to pay \$155 dollars (18%) more this winter than in 2008. Commercial and industrial natural gas prices are

average \$3.73 per gallon, up 50 cents from last year's levels.

• Propane heating expenditures for the upcoming winter are projected to increase 11% over winter 2008 levels.

> electricity prices are expected to show somewhat more modest increases this winter. The national retail price across all sectors (residential, commercial, and industrial) is projected to increase 8% above last year's average price per kilowatt-hour (kWh).



projected to increase 13% and 14%, respectively.

• The wholesale price of heating oil is projected to increase from \$2.69 per gallon last winter to \$3.09 in 2009. The national retail price of heating oil for the upcoming winter is expected to

For a complete overview of energy and fuel prices and trends for the winter of 2009 and beyond, see the U.S. Energy Information Administration's Short-Term Energy and Winter Fuels Outlook.

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Retail

INDUSTRY

Coal will remain the world's main source of power until 2030

oal is on the rise and likely to remain the chief power source globally well into the 21st century, this according to a new study released by the International Energy Agency. Appropriately titled, "World Energy Outlook 2008," the IEA also estimates that coal generated power will rise to 44 percent by 2015.

"Clearly we are seeing the benefits that coal provides by being a reliable, cost effective energy source," said Joe Lucas, Vice President for the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity (ACCCE). "As we move deeper into the 21st century it is important that continued investment in clean coal technology be a central issue of the world's energy diagram."

The study goes on to support the notion that future technological developments will help reduce emissions. "Developing and deploying technologies into broad commercial use will require both the public and private sectors working together," said Lucas. "By investing in these partnerships, which have brought other innovative emission reducing technologies to the marketplace, we will not only meet the challenge of reducing greenhouse gas emissions but we will also create jobs."

-Energy Central News

Corn cobs could be the new "green" fuel at Willmar power plant

Tillmar Municipal Utilities will test a new "recipe" for producing energy: corn cobs and coal. The utility's power plant will conduct a test burn of cobs and coal later this winter. If the test burn is successful, corn cobs could help the utility comply with the state's renewable energy mandate and help boost local farm income.

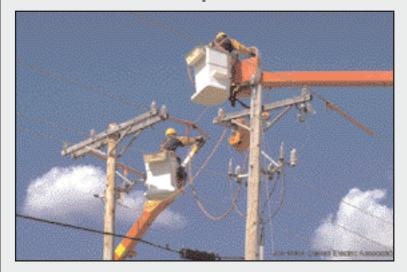
"Burning cobs may be able to help us meet our renewable energy goals and support the local economy at the same time," says Bruce Gomm, Willmar Municipal Utilities general manager.

The state is mandating all utilities, by 2025, have at least 25 percent of energy needs met by renewable sources. Willmar hopes generating power from biomass such as corn cobs, as well as its \$10 million wind turbine project, will help meet the mandate. The test burn, slated for February, will determine if cobs burn satisfactorily with coal and if the process is effective and efficient. Corn cobs have an energy value of 75 percent to 80 percent of Powder River Basin coal, which Willmar buys and burns at the local power plant, located near downtown.

-West Central Tribune

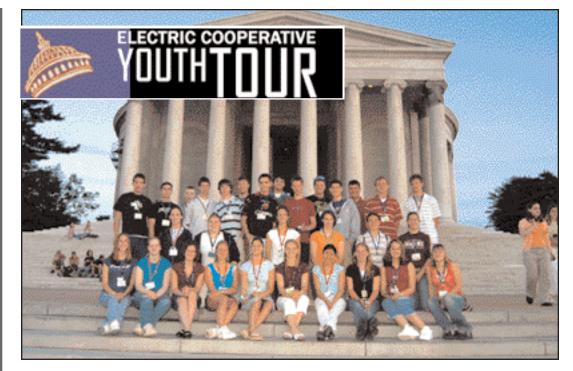


Power Line Worker Scholarships Offered



tudents accepted into one of Minnesota's three power line technology programs for the 2009-10 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, 2009.



Experience Washington D.C.

Time for high school juniors and seniors to apply

High school juniors and seniors have until March 6, 2009, to apply for the Cooperative's Washington Youth Tour competition. One local youth will win an all-expense paid trip to Washington D.C. June 13-18, 2009, from 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 Coop at 1-800-494-6272. You will have until March 6, 2009, 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.

LED light bulbs may replace CFLs in the future

Ithough compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs are much more efficient than standard incandescent bulbs, they do come with some environmental disposal issues. The day will come (possibly in the near future) when CFLs will be dethroned by light emitting diode (LED) bulbs. The LEDs are more efficient, using just a fraction of the energy CFLs use. However, manufacturers are still working to make them bright enough and more affordable, before they become the choice over CFLs for regular home lighting.

For decades LEDs have been used to light the numbers on clocks, cell phones and traffic signal lights. Until recently it has been impractical to use LEDs for household lighting and everyday applications because LEDs are built around costly semiconductor technology. But since the price of semiconductor materials has dropped in the last few years, LEDs are being used in more applications.

LED bulbs are lit by the movement of electrons. They have no filament to burn out. They contain no mercury or toxic substances. They are projected to last 60 times longer than incandescent bulbs and 10 times longer than CFLs. They do not generate waste heat like incandescents. LED lights use most of their energy for direct lighting. They will be a big improvement over

CFLs when they are ready for the household market.

One of the main problems right now is to make them brighter. Manufacturers have been clustering lots of small LED together to make one fixture that is bright enough to give off the desired light. At this time they still don't generate light much brighter than a 35 watt bulb, which is not enough for reading. Some manufacturers have made these multiple LEDs in one casing into a single 50 or 100-watt equivalent fixture but the cost is still at \$50-\$80 per light. Once manufacturers can lower this cost, LEDs will lead the way for efficient, low-energy-use lights that last a long time. Keep watching for this new technology to appear in stores, as it will be the light of the future in our homes.





- Quality and dependability you can count on
- Warranted not to leak for as long as you own your home





McLeod Cooperative Power Association

1231 Ford Ave. & Hwy. 22 in Glencoe Phone: 320-864-3148 1-800-494-MCPA

Cost of Big Screen TVs

Looking at the whole picture

Prices for big-screen televisions are dropping, but the cost of home entertainment may still be going up. That is because that new big screen TV that

you may be planning to buy will affect your electric bill for years to come.

The refrigerator is (or was) the appliance that demands the most electricity in the home, excluding cooling and water heating. Today, some sizes and types of televisions

use more electricity than an energyefficient refrigerator. Not surprisingly, bigger screens consume more electricity than smaller ones. Add other entertainment systems like game consoles, speakers, DVDs and digital video recorders, and you add nearly \$200 to your annual energy bill.

New Energy Standards

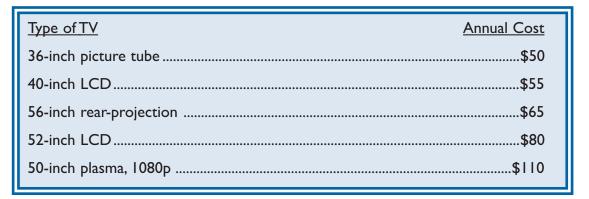
Last month, Energy Star came out with new energy labeling for televisions. The new standards will account for not only the energy used while the TV is running but also how much it drains while off. Major electronic devices like TV's drain energy even while turned off. If you

> recall, with the older televisions there used to be a fade-in while the picture came on. Newer models eliminated that by remaining in standby mode, and that requires electricity.

Energy costs quickly add up when you consider there are

more than 275 million television sets in this country, and we will buy nearly 36 million more sets this year. If all TVs sold in the U.S. meet the Energy Star requirements, the savings in energy costs will grow to about \$1 billion annually, and greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced by the equivalent of about I million cars. That is a brighter picture for all of us.

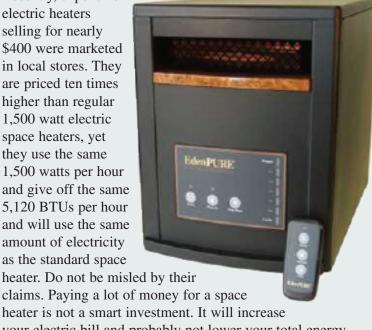
Source: Environmental Protection Agency



Do not be scared into buying an expensive heater with false advertising.

Be a smart consumer.

Recently, expensive electric heaters selling for nearly \$400 were marketed in local stores. They are priced ten times higher than regular 1,500 watt electric space heaters, yet they use the same 1,500 watts per hour and give off the same 5,120 BTUs per hour and will use the same amount of electricity as the standard space



claims. Paying a lot of money for a space heater is not a smart investment. It will increase your electric bill and probably not lower your total energy bill anywhere near 50%.

False Claim #1: Their advertising claims that they can cut your heating bills by up to 50%.

Fact: They will not be able to meet that claim unless you turn down the heat in the entire house to very minimal levels and just live in the one room where you use the heater.

False Claim #2: The ad quoted November fossil fuel costs at \$4.33 per gallon for fuel oil and \$2.25 per gallon for propane, with fuel costs possibly doubling by winter.

Fact: Fuel oil has not been over \$4.00 a gallon since midsummer in McLeod County. It is currently \$2.18 per gallon or about half of the scare tactic price used in the heater ad. Propane is currently less than \$2.00 a gallon from local vendors. Although fossil fuel costs may increase, no one knows that they may double.

False Claim #3: "If it is plugged in, it's saving you money" is their claim on the ad.

Fact: Any 1,500 watt heater that costs you \$300 or more to purchase is not saving you money. It will have a long pay-back. And just plugging in an appliance will not save you money.

Fact: If it is plugged in and you are using it in addition to your regular heating system, it is not saving you money. It is increasing your electric bill and you will still pay for heating the other rooms of your home.

False Claim #4: It heats up to 1,000 square feet for pennies a day.

Fact: If it is used continuously for two hours a day it will consume 3.0 kWh. At an average electric rate of 9 cents per kWh, the total cost is 27 cents. If used continuously for 24 hours a day it will cost \$3.24. If used continuously for the whole month it can use up to 1,080 kWh, increasing your electric bill by up to \$97 a month.

Were you around when the lights came on?

he Cooperative is looking for any members who remember when their home or farm first received electricity. We are asking any members with stories or photos to share to please call McLeod Co-op Power at 1-800-494-6272 and ask for Sue Pawelk. We would like to visit with you to start to record historical stories for the Cooperative's 75th anniversary, which will take place in 2010. Any photos you would loan to us would be copied and returned promptly. Thank you to those members who have already called. If you remember your home being energized, we would still like to talk to you!



Give your family what they want for Christmas

f you are thinking high definition (HD) television at your house this Christmas, then make sure to include an HD

receiver and HD programming services from DIRECTV. The Cooperative can help you with the purchase of an HD receiver or HD DVR receiver.

Or is your family longing for high speed internet? McLeod Cooperative Power can also help with WildBlue high speed internet. Whether your house has one computer or several, one WildBlue satellite dish can deliver your data fast. If you live in the country where DSL services are not available, this may be your only high speed option.

Gift certificates for DIRECTV, WildBlue, electricity or emergency medical programming are available at the Co-op. They make perfect stocking stuffers..

PARTIES OF THE ACTION OF THE A

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