

NEWS

April 2009

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Official publication of



www.mcleodcoop.com

McLeod Celebrates Annual Meeting

The members of McLeod Cooperative Power Association gathered for the Annual Meeting of the Cooperative on Wednesday, April 15, 2009. About 560 members were in attendance at the Hutchinson Event Center for the business meeting and the lunch that followed.

Three incumbent directors were each re-elected for another three-year term. Curtis Rossow of Buffalo Lake, Allan Duesterhoeft of Hutchinson, and Lester Ranzau of Glencoe were re-elected to serve Districts, 4, 5, & 6, respectively.

For the coming year the board elected new officers, with Gerald Roepke of New Germany serving as the Cooperative's president, Doug Kirtz of Hector as vice-president, Dale Peters of Brownton as Secretary-Treasurer, and Bill Polchow of Silver Lake as assistant secretary-treasurer.

Reports on cooperative programs and progress in 2008 were given by General Manager Kris Ingenthron and Board President Doug Kirtz. Office Manager Randall Ahrndt updated the members on the Co-op's finances. Board Vice-President Lester Ranzau reported on activities at Great River Energy.

Members were served a turkey dinner following the close of the meeting. Attendance prizes were also awarded. The two grand prizes, each a \$250 Cooperative gift certificate, were awarded to Eldon Podratz of Gaylord and Randall & Dana Wagner of Stewart.



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Standing left to right, re-elected directors from Dist 4-6, Curtis Rossow, Allan Duesterhoeft, and Lester Ranzau.

Tune up your cooling unit and receive a \$25 credit

Announcing the 2009 air conditioning tune-up program.



Just schedule a tune-up of your central air conditioner or air source heat pump (unit must be at least 5 years old and in working condition to qualify) and when your licensed professional HVAC contractor performs the service work, have them complete the rebate coupon on page 3 of this newsletter. Send the completed rebate form to the Cooperative with a copy of the contractor's invoice. His tune up must include the items on the coupon. After the Co-op receives your documentation, we will credit your electric bill \$25 within 4-6 weeks.

Erin Wolter named Washington D.C. Tour winner

Erin Wolter of rural Glencoe was selected as the winner in the Washington D.C. Youth Tour competition. She is the daughter of Bob and Dawn Wolter of Glencoe. She is a junior at Glencoe Silver Lake High School.

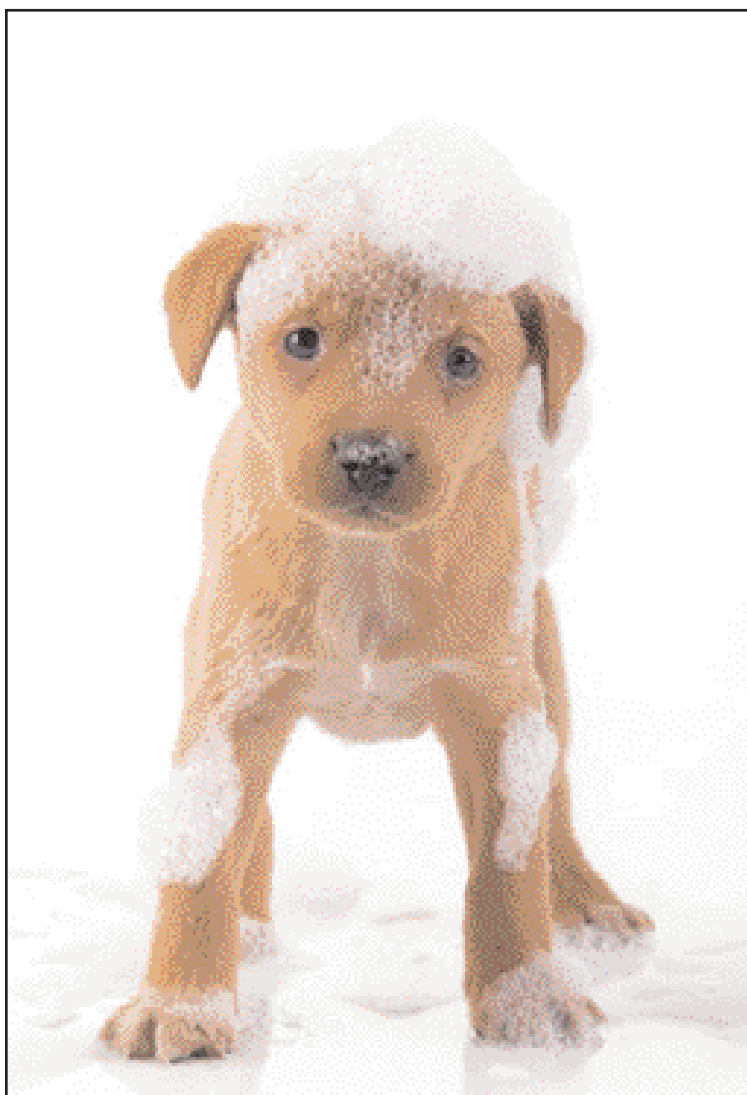


Erin will attend the national youth gathering in our nation's capital in June. Youth from nearly every state will participate in educational programs, tours and meet legislators.


Allocation notices on April bill statement

The amount of capital credits allocated to each member for 2008 is shown on the electric bill mailed in mid-April. It is based on margins allocated. MCPA allocations may be refunded to the member at some time in the future when capital credits for 2008 are retired.

The amount shown is not available to be deducted from the bill at this time. It is merely a notice of allocation. For many years the notice of allocation was mailed separately but due to high postage costs we are now economizing and listing it on your bill statement.

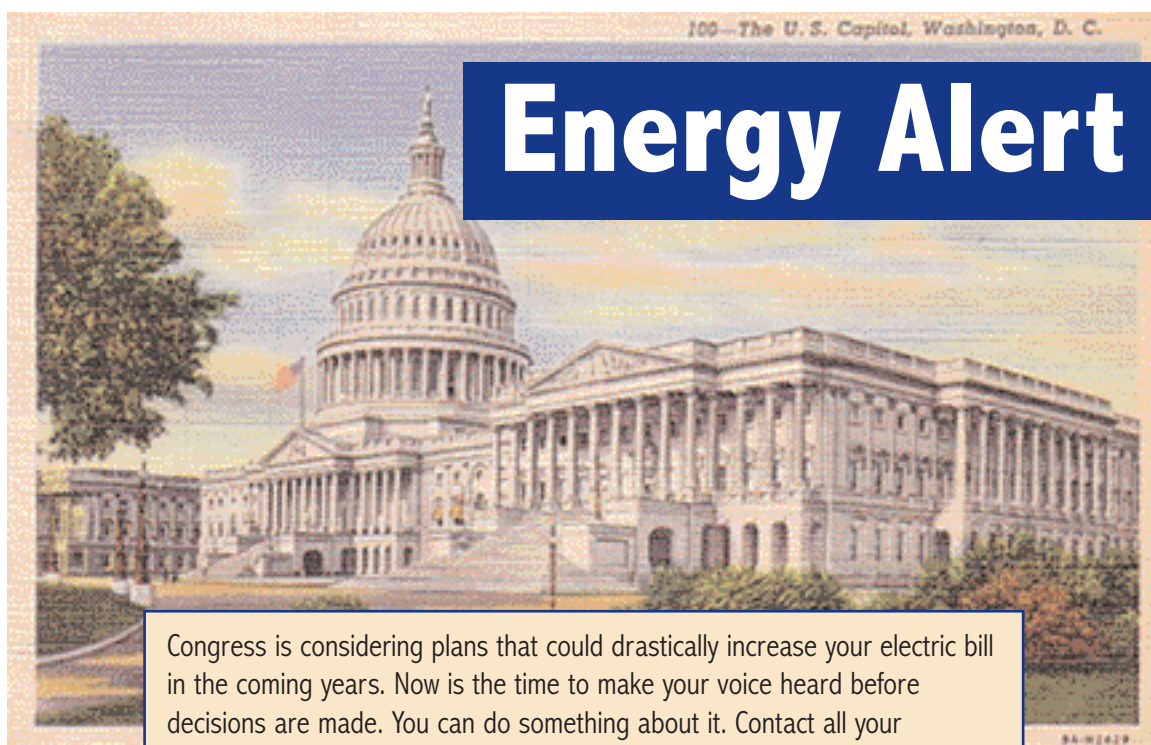


This Hot Water Moment Is Brought To You By:



Marathon
WATER HEATERS

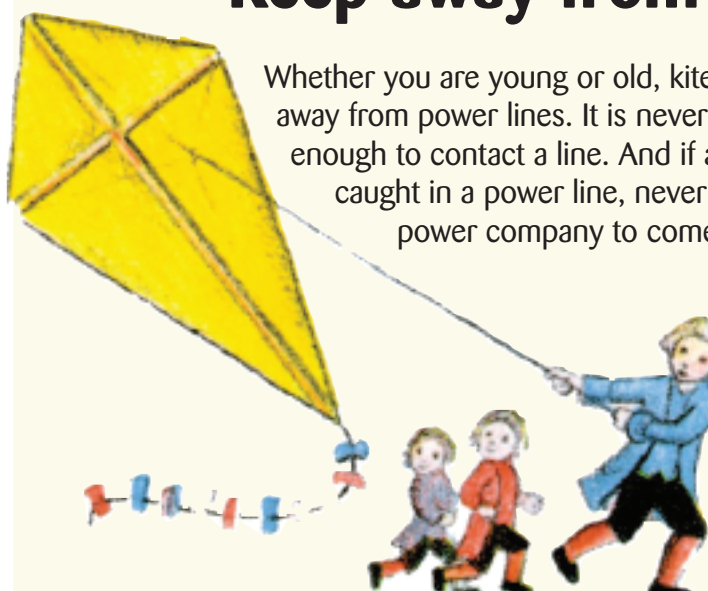
When people look for reliability and durability — they choose Marathon water heaters.



Energy Alert

Congress is considering plans that could drastically increase your electric bill in the coming years. Now is the time to make your voice heard before decisions are made. You can do something about it. Contact all your legislators at one time, by visiting www.OurEnergyMN.coop

Keep away from power lines!



Whether you are young or old, kite flying is only safe when done far away from power lines. It is never safe to fly a kite where it is close enough to contact a line. And if a kite, or anything else, ever gets caught in a power line, never try to get it down yourself. Call the power company to come and do it for you.

Just because you know these safety rules, your children or others may not. Please take a moment to make sure that the kite flyers in your family are aware of the dangers before they head outside with a kite.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

District 1 Oria Brinkmeier, <i>Lester Prairie</i>	District 6 Lester Ranzau, <i>Glencoe</i>
District 2 Dale Peters, Secretary-Treasurer <i>Brownton</i>	District 7 Bill Polchow, Asst. Secretary-Treasurer <i>Silver Lake</i>
District 3 Roger Karstens, <i>Hutchinson</i>	District 8 Doug Kirtz, Vice-President <i>Hector</i>
District 4 Curtis Rossow, <i>Buffalo Lake</i>	District 9 Gerald Roepke, President <i>New Germany</i>
District 5 Allan Duesterhoeft, <i>Hutchinson</i>	

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.
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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.

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Web site: www.mcleodcoop.com

Gopher State One Call 1-800-252-1166

Reservations being accepted for Coal Creek Tour

This year's Coal Creek Tour is August 4-6. Reservations 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, North Dakota Heritage Center, Headwaters Fort Mandan Visitors Center including Fort Mandan, a reconstructed and fully-furnished fort where Lewis & Clark spent a winter. Attendees go on a drive-through tour of Blue Flint Ethanol, which is constructed adjacent to Coal Creek generating plant, and a scenic tour of other generating facilities in the area, Garrison Dam and Lake Sakakawea overlook.

Cost for adults is \$150 per person. Students 10-18 years of age who share a room with their parents or grandparents pay only \$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 Tuesday, August 4, and returns to Glencoe about 6 p.m. on Thursday, August 6. 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 to make reservations with your VISA or Mastercard or return the completed form with your check. Call 1-800-494-6272 to sign up.

Please reserve _____ places for the Coal Creek Tour, August 4 - 6, 2009.

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.

Your Home: What You Should Know About Mold

Key Points

- Mold is a fungi growth that thrives in damp environments, such as wet basements and leaky attics.
- Mold can cause health problems associated with allergies and respiratory conditions.
- The best way to fix a mold issue is to eliminate sources of moisture in your home that lead to its growth.

Mold is a growing problem in millions of U.S. homes. Not only can mold damage building materials and furniture in your home, but it can cause or exacerbate a variety of health conditions. Mold is a fungi growth that thrives in damp environments, such as a wet basement or a leaky attic. If you suspect a mold problem in your home, take steps to clean and remove it, as well as to fix the moisture problems that lead to its growth.



The Truth About Mold

Understanding mold and its causes and effects can help you avoid mold problems in your home.

Here are some facts that you should know.

- Mold can be found almost anywhere; it can grow on virtually any substance, providing moisture is present. Mold can grow on wood, paper, carpet, and foods.
- Mold growth requires a temperature range of 40°F-100°F.
- Relative humidity in the home above 60% can create a fertile environment for mold growth.
- Exterior corners are common locations for mold and mildew growth in warm climates, and in poorly insulated buildings in colder climates.
- You cannot eliminate all mold and mold spores in the indoor environment; the best way to control indoor mold growth is to control moisture.
- Potential health effects and symptoms associated with mold exposures include allergic reactions, asthma, and other respiratory complaints.

Preventing Mold Growth

So how do you keep mold from attacking your home? While there is no way to completely eliminate mold, you can take steps to make your home less mold-friendly.

- If you identify a leak or water problem anywhere in your home, fix it as soon as possible to prevent mold growth.
- In areas with a perpetual moisture problem (such as a basement floor), do not install carpeting until the problem is corrected.

- Reduce indoor humidity (to 30%–60%) to decrease mold growth by venting bathrooms, dryers, and other moisture-generating sources to the outside; using air conditioners and de-humidifiers; increasing ventilation; and using exhaust fans when cooking, dish washing, and cleaning.
- Prevent condensation. Reduce the potential for condensation on cold surfaces (including windows, piping, exterior walls, roof, or floors) by adding insulation.
- Ensure that your home is ventilated properly. Areas that are poorly-ventilated have a greater tendency for mold growth.

Fixing Mold Problems

The key to mold control is moisture control. It is important to dry water damaged areas and items within 24-48 hours to prevent mold growth. If mold is a problem in your home, clean up the mold and get rid of the excess water or moisture. Fix leaky plumbing or other sources of water. Wash mold off hard surfaces with detergent and water, and dry completely. Absorbent materials—such as ceiling tiles and carpet—that become moldy may have to be replaced. Duct cleaning is another commonly-used strategy, although there is some debate about its effectiveness. For more information about mold control in your home, visit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Mold Resources web site.

Air Conditioner/Heat Pump Check List

Owner _____

Acct. # _____

Address _____

Location # _____

Phone # _____

Company doing Tune-Up _____

Technician's Name _____

Company Phone # _____

CHECK LIST

Brand Name _____

Model # _____

Serial # _____

Tons/BTU Rating _____ SEER Rating _____

- Clean Outdoor Unit
- Clean and Inspect "A" Coil
- Check Blower Belt
- Compressor Motor Amp Reading Check
- Compressor Amp Reading Check
- Blower & Oil
- Blower Motor Amp Reading Check
- Check Filter
- Check Refrigerant Level & Pressure
- Blow Out Drain Line
- Visual Inspection of Cooling System

Recommendations _____

Technician Signature _____

Date _____

The Evensons doubled their home size, yet cut their utility bills

When Tom and Kim Evenson built their home two years ago along West Lake Ripley, Litchfield, they already knew what kind of home they wanted. They had been planning to build their dream home for 14 years, ever since Tom purchased the property. It took all those years for Kim to get comfortable with the idea of living in the country.

"I grew up in town and was used to having the security of neighbors nearby," Kim explained. "But now I wouldn't want to live in town again. Of course, we installed a Heartland Security System, so that makes it easier! We don't worry about security anymore."

They may not have close neighbors, but they keep regular company with the numerous pheasants that share their natural 32 acres and lake.

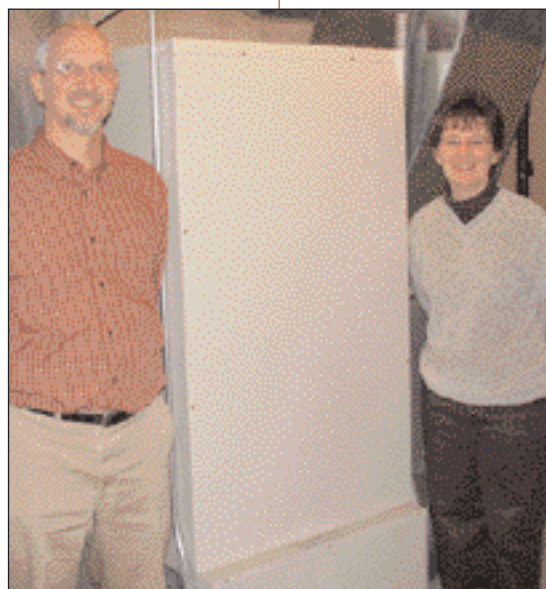
The Evensons own the Litchfield Dry Cleaners and have lived in Litchfield most of their 31 years of marriage.

"We lived in what I considered to be an energy-efficient 1,850 square foot rambler with a gas boiler for hot water heat, a gas stove top and gas water heater" Tom said. "So when we built our new home, which is about 4,200 square feet, I expected to pay a lot more for my utilities. People told us that a rural electric cooperative would charge more for electricity, so we were kind of scared."

Having never been a Cooperative member and not knowing everything that is available from a rural electric cooperative, the couple attended one of Meeker Cooperative's New Home Builders seminars.

"Since we had hot water heat in our home in town, I expected we would use either hot water or forced air heat in our new home. I had never heard about a Steffes furnace before."

After talking with Maynard Theis from the Co-op and researching all the options, Tom decided that a Steffes heat storage furnace and air source heat pump was the most cost-effective system for their needs.



The Evenson's Steffes storage heat furnace uses cheap off-peak electricity to store heat for times when their air source heat pump needs supplemental heat.

"As a businessman, I look at the return on investment. I ran the numbers and decided to go with this combination."

During the cold months of the year, the Evensons' air source heat pump supplies heat with a 180 percent efficiency rating until the outside temperature dips below 20 degrees. That's when the Steffes

kicks in, providing supplemental heat. A Steffes uses off-peak electricity to heat specially-designed bricks encased in a heavily-insulated chamber. Those bricks store that heat for use as needed around the clock.

"Because it's off-peak heat, I get the low [energy management] electric rate all the



Tom and Kim Evenson on the deck of their home they built two years ago.

time," Tom said.

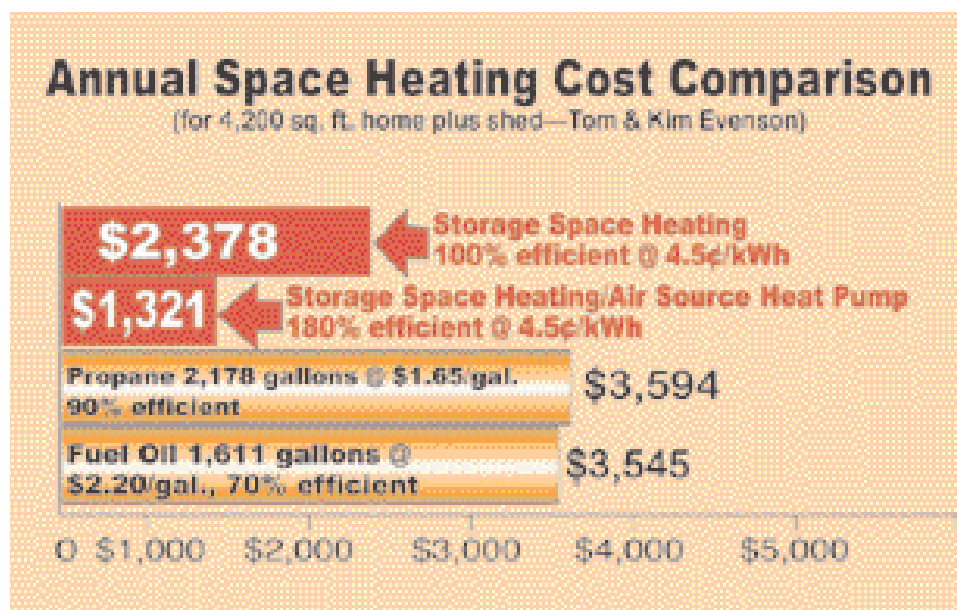
As an additional benefit, the Evenson's air source heat pump supplies their home with high-efficiency central air conditioning all summer.

The combination of the heat pump and Steffes cost a total of \$8,421. However, the cost to operate the system is so low that the Evensons were able to double the square footage of their living space and actually pay less for their heat than they did living in their 1,850 square foot rambler in Litchfield.

"We don't have gas for anything now and we enjoy the comfort of knowing we don't have to worry about gas leaks, or any pilot light going out — we don't have any of the fears that can come with gas."

Now that the Evensons have lived in their home for a couple of years, would they do anything differently?

"Well, if I had it to do over again, I would purchase a hydronic Steffes, so we could have the in-floor hot water option for heating our floors in the basement and bathroom," Tom said.



ALWAYS CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

One free, easy call gets your utility lines marked AND helps protect you from injury and expense.

Safe Digging Is No Accident: Always Call 811 Before You Dig

Know what's below. Always call 811 before you dig. Visit call811.com for more information.

NOTE: It is the member's responsibility to hire a locator or electrician and pay for location services for any wires located between the meter and the home.



Seven ways to cut costs in your dairy operation

Owning a dairy operation is challenging these days. Unfortunately, the rising price of operations and feed isn't balanced out by rising milk prices. Dairy farmers are looking at ways to run more efficiently and conserve energy. Below are some things dairy farmers can do to make a significant difference:

Lighting

- Replace incandescent lights with compact fluorescent lamps and save up to 75 percent.
- Switch out T12 fluorescent lamps with T8 lamps and cut your energy use by as much as 20 percent or more.
- The addition of long-day lighting to a barn using energy efficient fluorescent lights can be one of the most profitable things a farmer can do — even better than milking three times a day, says a University of Wisconsin dairy scientist. Pay-back averages six months to a year, taking into account the extra feed necessary.

Plate cooler

A plate cooler is an efficient way to pre-cool milk using a farm's existing water supply. Pre-cooling improves milk's quality and can cut bulk tank cooling costs in half. In addition, through the use of a waste heat exchanger, the warm water from the plate cooler can be reused to water cattle, which increases water consumption and, in turn, milk production. It can also be used to wash milking equipment, significantly reducing the amount of hot water used in the operation.

Variable speed vacuum pump

Vacuum pumps are sized to meet the largest anticipated need, although that level occurs infrequently. Running the pump continuously wastes energy and is unnecessarily noisy. Using a variable speed pump (or variable frequency drive), can save anywhere from 50 to 80 percent in energy costs while reducing noise.

This also goes for the milk transfer pump. Using a variable speed drive can reduce energy use by 40 to 60 percent.

Scroll compressor: Reciprocating compressors have historically used a lot of electricity to move

compressed gas with a system of noisy pistons and valves that were noisy and high-maintenance. A scroll compressor on the bulk tank is smoother, more efficient, much quieter, and actually lasts longer. Milk cooling costs can be cut by as much as 20 percent with this technology.

High-efficiency water heaters and storage water program

High-efficiency water heaters that boast energy factors greater than .90 will significantly reduce hot water costs. When combined with the Cooperative's storage water program, dairy operations (and households) can reduce their hot water costs by as much as 50 percent or more.

High-efficiency ventilation systems

The value of using fans in free-stall barns has been proven. However, which system is best? Conventional fans are noisy and use a lot of electricity. Another option is replacing those fans with high-volume, low-speed (HVLS) fans. Their design allows similar air movement with much fewer units. Because the blades move much more slowly, noise levels are greatly reduced. Each HVLS fan costs an average of \$1 per day to run, versus a cost of \$4 to \$6 per day for each high-speed fan*.

Energy Star® appliances

Replacing appliances that are at least 10 years old or older with Energy Star rated appliances saves significantly. Remember, besides the cost to purchase an appliance, there also is a cost to run it. Check out the yellow Energy Guide sticker on the appliance to estimate energy costs per year to run.

Grants, rebates and programs can help offset energy efficiency improvements

Your Cooperative has grants and rebates available to help offset the cost of installing energy-efficient equipment and programs. In addition, the Co-op's energy management programs usually offer reduced electric rates that further cut overall energy costs. Most often, the cost of energy efficient upgrades is paid back with the energy savings that result. The good news is that even after the cost is paid back, the energy savings continue. Call your Cooperative and talk with their Energy Management personnel. They will answer all your questions.

**This assumes an electric rate of \$.07 per kWh.
Source: Professional Animal Science, February 2008.*

INDUSTRY

News

A few not-too-painful changes could shave 30% off your energy bill

You don't have to shiver in the dark to reduce your home energy costs. Just ask the Luttrells and Wattays of Smyrna, Del. For last month's Frugal Family Challenge, USA TODAY and Good Morning America Weekend challenged both families to cut their home energy bills. The Wattays won the challenge, but just by a couple of Btus. They reduced their monthly energy bill by 30.6%, while the Luttrells cut theirs by 29.4%. Here's a look at both families:

The Wattays' combined electricity and natural gas bills dropped by more than \$150 in February from January. They spent less time in the shower, unplugged their space heater, lowered their thermostat and got in the habit of turning off lights and unplugging appliances that weren't in use. The Luttrells cut their electricity and natural gas bills by \$103, with most of the savings coming from lower electricity use. They unplugged their second refrigerator, shortened their showers, lowered their thermostat, and turned off unused appliances.

The Luttrells and Wattays proved you don't have to spend a lot of money on home improvements to make a big dent in home energy bills. Sometimes it's right at the tip of your fingers.

~USA Today

Minnesota senators vote to allow new nuclear power plants in state

Minnesota senators voted to remove a ban on new nuclear power plants in the state. The decision to lift the 15-year-old ban, approved on a 42-24 vote, was added to an all-purpose energy bill that got preliminary approval in the body.

The stance was a surprise to many. Just last week, after two days of lengthy debate, a House energy committee voted against lifting the moratorium, established in 1994. Since then, nuclear power plants have not been an option in Minnesota. Proponents have argued that, with energy costs rising and concerns over greenhouse gas emissions increasing, nuclear power should at least be an option.

Opponents, however, argue that nuclear waste remains a serious problem. In Minnesota, nuclear plants in Red Wing and Monticello are allowed to store that waste on-site. Even if the state eventually lifts the moratorium, lawmakers on both sides of the issue acknowledge it would take more than a decade and perhaps longer for a nuclear plant to be built and go online in the state.

~Pioneer Press

The perfect Mother's or Father's Day gift



*Do you worry about...
your parents getting older?
mom or dad living alone?*

The First Alert emergency pendant from McLeod Co-op Power may be just the thing they need to help you worry less while they live on their own. One press of the button will call the 24-hour medical dispatch center, which will send a family member, neighbor or police over to help. The pendant allows them to work outside in the garden or go to the mailbox, and still summon help if they need it. Emergency pendants are reasonably priced and make a perfect Mother's Day or Father's Day gift.

Call McLeod Co-op Power at 1-800-494-MCPA for more information.



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- Dedicated instant on connection!



McLeod Cooperative Power Association

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

Rebate amounts for ENERGY STAR® cooling units



Consumers purchasing new air conditioners or air source heat pumps (ASHP) will need to buy a high efficiency unit AND make sure it is installed by a registered contractor to receive a rebate from the Co-op.

The amount of the rebate is determined by the efficiency of the unit.

SEER 13	\$ 330
SEER 14.....	\$480
SEER 15.....	\$580
SEER 16+	\$630

To receive the rebate, your installing contracting firm must also be registered with the HVAC Reduction service. Most utilities in the state of Minnesota are requiring contractors to successfully complete a test to verify that they know how to properly complete a high efficiency installation. If they do not pass the test, they will receive training before being retested. Utilities want to provide consumers with some assurance that the contractor installing their system

knows how to properly install a cooling unit to meet its design SEER rating and that the contractor agrees to do installations according to these standards.

Rebates will only be paid to consumers, if their installing contractor is listed on the HVAC Reduction site. You can link there from McLeod Co-op Power's web site or go there directly at http://hvacreduction.net/gre/public_search.cfm

If you do not have internet access, you can also check with the energy experts at McLeod Co-op Power, to find out what local contractors have been certified as registered contractors under this program.

Climate Change Policy Hits Your Pocketbook

Policy will decide increases in electric bills

Congress and the federal government are focused on prioritizing climate change policy. Given the long list of environmental impacts and expensive solutions, any action taken to address the issue will certainly increase the cost of electricity we use everyday.

Climate change proposals seek to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, carbon dioxide in particular. In the United States, power plants that burn fossil fuels produce about 2.4 billion tons of carbon dioxide every year. That works out to about 39 percent of the nation's man-made output of the gas — the largest single source.

Electric cooperatives are involved in cutting edge work to develop new technologies to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from power plants, but those options aren't yet ready for prime time. They're limited, largely untested, and expensive. Yet potential legislation would rely on them to make significant carbon dioxide cuts nationwide.

A key committee in the U.S. House of Representatives has announced plans to consider a climate change bill by this summer, one that may for the first time classify carbon dioxide as a pollutant and impose a cap-and-trade tax to limit carbon emissions. Cap-and-trade systems work by setting a specific limit on airborne pollutants from sources like power plants, factories, and refineries, and require those sources to account for all emissions with issued allowances.

Cap-and-trade has worked well during the past 15 years to reduce emissions of acid rain-causing sulfur dioxide nationwide and over the last decade to curb smog-creating nitrogen oxides in the eastern half of the country. However, some cap-and-trade tax proposals for carbon dioxide contain a new twist: pricey allowances.

Allowances would be auctioned off at undetermined prices, leading to huge cost burdens for any source of carbon dioxide

Putting a Price on Carbon

All climate change policy proposals seek to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide. While the greenhouse gas can be removed from the air (plants and trees are nature's best example), slashing man-made emissions tops the list of climate change remedies. A carbon tax or cap-and-trade tax are the current options for doing so.

CARBON TAX	CAP & TRADE TAX
Q: What is it? A: A levy on energy sources emitting carbon dioxide meant to cut consumption of fossil fuels like coal, natural gas, and oil. The tax would most likely be based on the actual carbon content, in tons, found in each fuel type. The effectiveness of such a system depends on the actual price established per ton of carbon.	Q: What is it? A: In its most basic form, a cap-and-trade tax uses market forces to curb emissions of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide. Each source (like a power plant) has a limit, or set number of allowances, placed on the amount of gases it can release—the cap. Those who make investments to curb emissions under the cap can sell any extra allowances to those who can't make reductions as easily—the trade. The cap-and-trade tax being considered by Congress would sell allowances through an auction, essentially making all sources pay for any amount of carbon dioxide emitted.
PROS <ul style="list-style-type: none">⊕ Economic certainty: costs are easily tallied up-front⊕ Resulting revenue could be used for research on new energy technologies, create incentives for non-emitting sources such as nuclear power and renewables, or returned to taxpayers via rebates and other assistance	PROS <ul style="list-style-type: none">⊕ If implemented well, provides an opportunity to find the most efficient ways to reduce emissions⊕ Guaranteed environmental benefits
CONS <ul style="list-style-type: none">⊖ No specific goal for carbon dioxide reductions set⊖ Sources of emissions could essentially pay to maintain "business as usual"⊖ If the tax is set too high, prices could skyrocket across the board; electricity bills, as well as the price of goods and services dependant on fossil fuels, would increase	CONS <ul style="list-style-type: none">⊖ Financial speculators could ultimately determine the price of carbon, directly impacting electricity bills⊖ Success of reducing emissions relies on technology that is currently limited, largely untested, and expensive⊖ If used to generate additional federal revenue, essentially turns electric co-ops into government tax collectors

Source: National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

emissions. In the case of power plants, those costs would ultimately be passed on to consumers using the power, in some cases adding \$50 or more to electric bills each month. In late February, the Obama Administration pointed to such a system as a new, substantial source of revenue for the federal government — effectively muddying the initial environmental argument for regulating carbon dioxide.

Such a backdoor tax increase would force electric cooperatives to essentially become tax collectors for the federal government, and allow Wall Street investors to set allowance prices and determine how much you pay for electricity.

We need to help Congress draft an energy solution that accomplishes environmental goals while taking affordability into account. But time may be tight: if Congress fails to act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency stands ready to step in, leaving decisions that affect consumer's pocketbooks up to unelected bureaucrats.

Electric cooperatives want to work with Congress to address climate change in an affordable and environmentally responsible fashion. We're ready to provide insight into how various policy proposals will impact consumers, and urge lawmakers to reach the right answers.

National energy and climate change policy must focus on reducing emissions, not on "revenue enhancement" for federal government. Money generated, through a cap-and-trade tax or otherwise, must be used wisely: devoted to developing related technology or returned to those who foot the bill. And Congress should take the lead on climate change, not regulators or Wall Street speculators.

In unity with 42 million other electric co-ops consumers around the country, urge your U.S. representative and senators to work with electric cooperatives to keep electric bills affordable. Get involved in this effort by participating in the Our Energy, Our Future — grassroots campaign at www.ourenergy.coop.

MCPA employees donate to food shelf

MCPA employees brought in food during the month of March to help support the McLeod Emergency Food Shelf. A total of 126.5 pounds of food was collected as well as \$310 in cash and checks. Donations from MCPA and other Glencoe businesses were matched by a third party as part of a fundraising project organized by the Glencoe Chamber of Commerce.



Flooding caused shut down of Garrison Dam for first time in its history

Missouri River flooding in late March forced two western North Dakota electric power plants to stop running because they lacked the water they needed to operate.

The Army Corps of Engineers stopped releasing water Tuesday, March 24 from the Garrison Dam, which feeds water from Lake Sakakawea into the Missouri River downstream. This is the first time in the dam's long history that it was ever shut down. The corps did so to ease flooding problems in Bismarck. Newly formed ice dams were causing water to back up and flood parts of southwest Bismarck. The move also caused the Missouri's upstream levels to drop in west central North Dakota, where the Stanton Station and Leland Olds power stations rely on river water to generate the steam needed to power their turbines and create electricity.

Great River Energy's Coal Creek power station, which generates 1,100 megawatts of electricity, is the state's largest power plant. It also relies on Missouri River water but it has a 12- to 14-day water reserve, and was unaffected by the dam's shutdown.

Following actions that eased flooding concerns in the Bismarck-Mandan area, the Army Corps of Engineers started releasing water again on March 27 — primarily to provide an adequate supply of water for local communities, including Washburn, and to make it possible for the power plants to start generating electricity again. On Saturday, March 28 power plant employees were slowly able to bring the plants back on line. During the outage, employees performed maintenance activities on the power plant and did inspections.

Operation Round Up donations awarded in 2009



The Operation Round Up Board met in March to determine which projects could be funded this year. Funds donated to Operation Round Up are from electric members and employees who have signed up to participate in the program. We encourage more members to sign up. Your electric bill is just rounded up to the nearest dollar and your change is added to the change of other members to make these grants possible.

Projects receiving funding of \$500:

- **American Cancer Society/Relay for Life of Renville County**
to fund their program, 800# and website. (Pictured right)
- **Hutchinson Theatre Company**
to launch a four week program for 4th-9th grade students.
- **McLeod Alliance for Victims of Domestic Violence**
for funding for purchase of TV/DVD/VCR and children's DVDs.
- **McLeod Emergency Food Shelf**
to provide food to help those who have been hit hard by unemployment and the economy.



Recipients of \$200:

- **Crow River Amateur Radio Club**
to provide storm spotters information directly to the National Weather Center in Chanhassen.
- **Girl Scouts**
to subsidize cost for girls from local communities to participate in swim teams.
- **Lutheran Social Service Caregiver Respite Program**
to provide education for caregivers.
- **Santa's Helpers (Sibley County)**
to provide gifts for low income families.

Members may begin donating to Operation Round Up® any time of the year



Members helping members and members helping their community = Operation Round Up

The few cents that our members give by rounding up their electric bill can multiply to dollars for local charities that build up our whole community. It is easy to sign up, painless to participate in, and a great opportunity for your small donations to make a big difference.

Members who sign up for Operation Round Up will have their monthly electric bill rounded up to the nearest dollar. The difference between the billing amount and the nearest dollar goes to the Operation Round Up Trust. Members on the program donate from -0- to \$.99 a month, depending on the amount of their electric bill. The average member donates \$6.00 a year to the program. Many worthwhile charities benefit from the proceeds of the trust each year. If you do not already participate, please fill out the form and return it to the Co-op. We will get you set up as an Operation Round Up participant.

Yes, sign me up for Operation Round Up. I understand that my bills will be rounded up to the next dollar amount and the proceeds will be used for local charitable programs.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Account #: _____

Signature: _____