

Inside this issue...



Guide to buying a home generator

3



Receive substantial financial assistance for installing a geothermal system

4



Coal Creek Tour
June 7 - 9

8

Official publication of



www.mcleodcoop.com

Annual business meeting was April 12



President Gerald Roepke addressed the membership.

The members of McLeod Cooperative Power Association gathered for the 76th annual meeting of the Cooperative on Tuesday, April 12, 2011 at the Hutchinson Event Center. Entertainment was provided by comedians Wilhelmina & Thisnelda.

About 500 persons attended the meeting and lunch that followed.

Three directors were elected for a three-year term each: Oria Brinkmeier, Dale Peters and Roger Karstens were elected to serve Districts, 1,2, and 3, respectively.

Office Manager Randall Ahrndt updated the members on the Co-op's finances. Board President Gerald Roepke, and General Manager Kris Ingenthron, each gave short presentations on the state of the Co-op. Guest speaker was Eric Olsen of Great River Energy and Rachel Posusta of GSL spoke about her 2010 Washington D.C. Youth Tour trip.

Attendance prizes were also awarded. The grand prize was a 5,500 watt Generac portable generator. It was won by Yvonne Piker of Hutchinson.



Members were served a turkey dinner following the meeting.



About 500 members attended the meeting and enjoyed lunch.



Directors re-elected to another three year term were left to right: Dale Peters, Oria Brinkmeier, and Roger Karstens.

Presorted Standard
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #80
HUTCHINSON, MN
55350



Yvonne Piker of Hutchinson was the grand prize winner of the 5500 watt generator.

Would you like wood chips? Carr's Tree Service is looking for members who would like wood chips dumped on their property when the tree service is doing work in their area. If you are interested, call the Co-op office. Leave your name, phone # and Location #. Carr's Tree Service will call you when they will be working near your home to make arrangements for dumping the wood chips.

Allocation notices on April bill statement

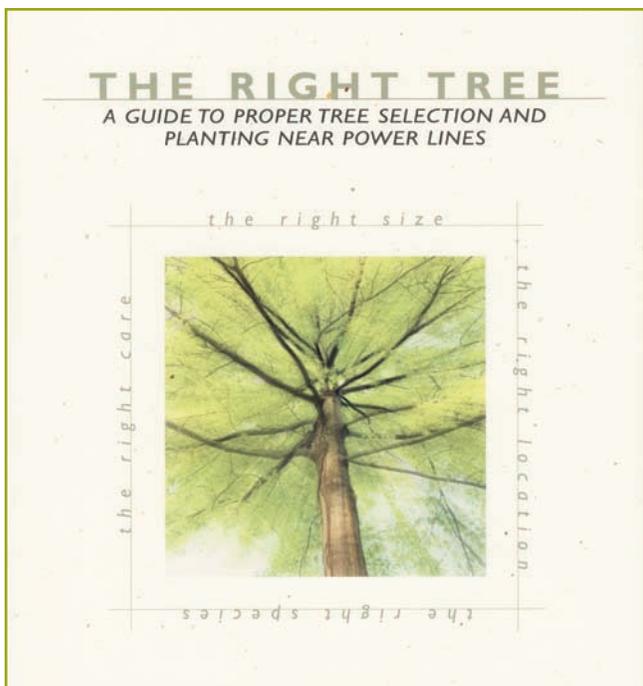
The amount of capital credits allocated to each member for 2010 is shown on the electric bill mailed in mid-April. It is based on margins allocated. MCPA allocations may be refunded to the member at some time in the future when capital credits for 2010 are retired.

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.

Mandy Schlauderaff is 2011 Washington D.C. Youth Tour winner



Mandy Schlauderaff, a junior at Glencoe-Silver Lake High School, will be representing McLeod Cooperative Power in June on the 2011 Washington D.C. Youth Tour. Mandy is the daughter of Dale and Lois Schlauderaff. She competed with several other students who submitted entries in the youth tour competition.



Make sure you get THE RIGHT TREE

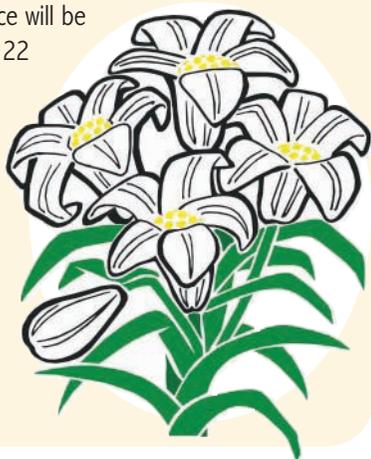
It is important that you select the proper tree type and size if planting near power lines. It can also be important to select the right size and type of tree and plant it in the right location to benefit from winter sun and be shaded from summer sun. On which side of your house you plant trees or shrubs can affect your annual heating or cooling bill.

Stop in the office or call to have us send you a free copy of *The Right Tree*. It is a guide to help you select the right species, plant it in the right location and give it the proper care.

McLeod Cooperative Power office will be closed on Good Friday, April 22

The Cooperative office will be closed Friday, April 22 in observance of Good Friday.

Members with an outage or emergency may dial 1-800-927-5685. Members needing DIRECTV assistance may call 1-800-927-5414.



Manager's Message —

by Kris Ingenthron, General Manager
McLeod Cooperative Power Association



Battling Copper Crime

Soaring metal prices have been blamed for an increase in thefts of copper and aluminum, primary components of electric distribution lines. Recent thefts of copper wire and equipment from electric utilities have been responsible for power outages, additional maintenance and expenses, diminished service reliability, and, in some cases, serious injury or death.

Copper in wire is appealing to thieves who want to sell the metal for scrap. Burglars will often climb power poles, scale fences, and break into buildings to steal the precious metal. Needless to say, a 542 percent increase in the price of copper since 2001 has prompted thieves to become bolder and more inventive.

In Oklahoma, members of one electric co-op are facing an estimated \$1 million repair bill because copper thieves wrecked a substation for just \$100 worth of the metal last year. In New Mexico, a man was found dead beneath a power pole, electrocuted while trying to cut copper wiring from a live transformer. A Texas man lost his life when he cut into a live power line while trying to steal copper. Similar accidents have been reported across the country.

“To a would-be thief, stealing copper may seem like a quick way to make a buck,” But it’s not only illegal, it’s costly and

it’s not worth a life. Working with any metal and electricity is a dangerous combination, even for trained employees using proper equipment.”

Some electric cooperatives stamp copper and aluminum wire with an ID number to deter theft. Stolen wire is commonly brought to recycling centers and traded for cash. Although many state laws require recycling centers to keep records of transactions, enforcement can be difficult. Without identifying marks, stolen wire is hard to track and is rarely recovered.

Thieves may not understand that they are risking their lives by taking copper from substations, where high transmission voltage is stepped down to a lower current for distribution lines. All power lines carry a potentially deadly charge.

McLeod Cooperative Power Association urges you to follow the guidelines below to guard against danger and prevent copper thefts.

- Never enter or touch equipment inside a substation; stay away from power lines and anything touching a power line.

- If you notice anything unusual with electric facilities, such as an open substation gate, open equipment, or hanging wire,

contact your electric co-op immediately.

- If you see anyone around electric substations or electric facilities other than co-op personnel or contractors, call the police.

- Install motion-sensor lights on the outside of your house and business to deter possible thieves.

- Store tools and wire cutters in a secure location, and never leave them out while you are away.

- If you work in construction, do not leave any loose wires or plumbing unattended at the job site, especially overnight.

- Help spread the word about the deadly consequences that can result from trying to steal copper or aluminum.

Please help us prevent these thefts. If you notice anything unusual, call McLeod Cooperative Power immediately at 1-800-494-6272. If you see anyone other than co-op personnel or contractors around substations or other electric facilities, call the police.

Cooperatively yours,

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

District 1
Oria Brinkmeier, *Lester Prairie*

District 2
Dale Peters, Secretary-Treasurer
Brownston

District 3
Roger Karstens, *Hutchinson*

District 4
Doug Kirtz, *Hector*

District 5
Allan Duesterhoeft, *Hutchinson*

District 6
Lester Ranzau, Vice President
Glencoe

District 7
Bill Polchow, Asst. Secretary-Treasurer
Silver Lake

District 8
Keith Peterson, *Hector*

District 9
Gerald Roepke, President
New Germany

MCLEOD COOPERATIVE POWER ASSOCIATION NEWS

USPS Pending ISSN Pending
Periodicals Postage Paid at pending
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
McLeod Coop Power News
P O Box 70, Glencoe, MN 55336-0070

The *McLeod Coop Power News* is published monthly for \$7 per year for members and \$10 per year for non-members by McLeod Cooperative Power Association
1231 Ford Ave. North, Glencoe, MN 55336-0070

General Manager: Kris Ingenthron
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.

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

Your Guide to Buying a Home Generator

- A generator can provide a reliable form of back-up power for your home in case of an outage.
- Purchasing the right generator requires careful consideration of the type and sizes available and your power needs.
- Always operate your generator safely, according to manufacturers instructions.

While your electric power is generally very reliable, outages do happen. Extended outages can be very inconvenient and uncomfortable, depending on the weather. Backup power is more than just a luxury for many homeowners. Those with security issues or critical home medical equipment have a serious need to maintain constant power. These issues—combined with the growing dependence on electronic gadgets of all kinds—have increased interest in emergency home generators.

Many homeowners, however, are coming at this issue for the first time and often have little understanding of how home generators work and the different types that are available. This article is designed to serve as your guide in selecting the right system for your home.

Types of Home Generators

There are two basic types of home power generation systems available—portable emergency generators and standby generators.

Portable generators are fueled by gasoline, diesel, or propane. Prices for residential portable units range from about \$400 to \$1,500, depending on size. Most units vary in size from 1 to 10 kilowatts (kW), although mid-sized sets at about 5 kW are the most popular

choices. During a power outage, portable units are fueled, hooked to the load, and then started manually. Portable generators are easy



Source: www.sxc.hu

to use, mobile, and useful for other purposes such as camping. However, they provide limited power and they must be refueled periodically.

Standby units are mounted on a concrete pad outside the home, like an air-conditioning unit. The generator is connected to the home by an automatic transfer switch. Transfer switches prevent the generator from sending electricity back through the transmission line, keeping

power line workers safe from harm. Within 30 seconds of a power failure, the generator starts the electric circuits in the home. When power is restored, the standby generator is automatically disconnected from the home circuits, and it powers down.

Standby units are typically fueled by natural gas. A major advantage of a standby unit is that it can be hooked directly to the natural gas line—with no need for fuel refills. Also, standby units turn on and off automatically—thus avoiding the need to manually start the unit. Standby units typically have a higher wattage rating than portable generators and—depending on size—can power all of the circuits in your home. Standby units are more expensive however—ranging from \$2,000 and up—and must be installed by a qualified electrical contractor.

Selecting the Right Size

So, how do you choose the right size generator for your home? The answer depends on what you want to use it for. For powering some lights and a couple of appliances, a small portable unit would work. For long-term protection, including an air-conditioning unit, a standby generator would be the better choice. In sizing a portable unit, add up the total wattage of the equipment or appliances you wish to run. Check the owner's manual or serial plate for wattage rating. Household items with motors—such as refrigerators or dishwashers—have a “start-up wattage” that is generally two or three times the running wattage. This must be calculated in the total. If no start-up wattage is listed, assume it is three times the running wattage. The table below provides average wattage ratings for typical household items. For standby systems, work with a qualified installer to properly size the system to fit your needs.

Household item	Running Wattage	Start-up Wattage
Refrigerator/Freezer	700 W (0.7 kW)	2,200 W (2.2kW)
Microwave	750 W (0.75 kW)	0
Clothes Washer	1,100 W (1.1 kW)	2,300 W (2.3kW)
Television	300 W (0.3 kW)	0

McLeod Cooperative Power Questline has been prepared solely for the purpose of providing helpful information to users of this service. The information has been compiled by Tech Resources, a contractor to McLeod Cooperative Power; however, no representation is made by either Tech Resources or McLeod Cooperative Power as to the completeness or accuracy of the information contained therein. In particular, some information may be incomplete, may contain errors or may be out of date. In addition, neither Tech Resources nor McLeod Cooperative Power endorses any product or service mentioned therein.

Generator Safety

If used properly, generators are a safe and effective means of providing power for your home in the event of an outage. Follow these tips to help protect your home and family:

- Do not attempt to connect your generator to the electrical system in your home or any building. The electricity you generate will back feed to the outside utility lines, where it can kill or injure utility service personnel attempting to restore power. A transfer switch—properly installed by a qualified electrician—can prevent the generator from sending electricity back through the transmission line.
- Make sure generators are properly wired for your home and do not connect a generator directly to your home's main circuit panel.
- Never plug your generator into an outlet.
- Use properly sized and grounded extension cords, and keep cords hidden so they do not present a tripping hazard.
- Always properly ventilate a portable generator. Gasoline-powered generators produce carbon monoxide and the fumes can be deadly.
- Make sure that the total electric load on your generator will not exceed the generator's rating.
- Handle fuel carefully. Turn the generator off to refuel. Store fuel in a properly designed container in a safe location, away from children.
- Make sure that a standby unit is installed by a qualified contractor according to National Electric Code and local building code standards.

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.**





Energy Efficiency Tax Credits extended through 2011 at a reduced rate

In 2011 efficiency upgrade tax credits drop, but don't disappear. Tax credits of 10 percent of the cost of certain qualifying improvements are still available to homeowners. Below is a list of improvements that meet the criteria. For an expanded list including qualifying models, please visit www.EnergyStar.gov/taxcredits.

Since 2005, Congress has enacted a series of tax breaks for consumers who take steps to make their homes more energy efficient. In December, Congress approved extending some popular efficiency tax credits through December 31, 2011, although at reduced levels from those originally offered. Tax credits are beneficial because they directly reduce, dollar for dollar, any federal income tax you owe.

The credit applies to energy efficiency improvements in the building envelope of existing homes and for the purchase of high-efficiency heating, cooling and water-heating equipment. The total lifetime credit that can be claimed on energy efficiency improvements made between 2006 and 2011 has been reduced from \$1,500 to \$500.

The maximum tax credit for all improvements made in 2011 is 10 percent of the cost—up to \$500—including tax credits for any improvements made in 2006-2010. There are also maximum allowances for different upgrades. Eligible products/qualifications include:

- Insulation materials (\$500): Typical bulk insulation products can qualify, such as batts, rolls, blow-in fibers, rigid boards, expanding spray, and pour-in-place. Also includes products that reduce air leaks including weather stripping, spray foam, caulk and house wrap.



- Windows (\$200): All ENERGY STAR® windows now qualify.
 - Doors and skylights (\$500): Must have U-factor and Solar Heat Gain Coefficient (SHGC) ratings of less than or equal to 0.30.
 - Fossil fuel water heaters (\$300): Energy Factor ≥ 0.82 OR a thermal efficiency of at least 90 percent.
 - Electric heat pump water heaters (\$500): Energy Factor ≥ 2.0 . Tax credit includes installation costs.
 - Furnaces (\$150): Must have at least 95 percent (up from 90 percent) annual fuel utilization efficiency (AFUE). Oil furnaces and boilers were returned to the single furnace category at 95 percent AFUE.
 - Advanced main air circulating fan (\$50): Must utilize less than 2 percent of a furnace's total energy consumption.
 - Central air conditioner (\$300): Must have a seasonal energy efficiency ratio (SEER) of at least 16 and an energy efficiency rating (EER) of at least 13.
 - Air-source heat pump (\$300): Must have at least a heating seasonal performance factor (HSPF) of 9, SEER of 16 and EER of 13.
 - Biomass fuel stove (\$300): Must have a thermal efficiency rating of at least 75 percent.
 - Geothermal Heat Pumps qualify for a 30 percent credit
- Residential geothermal heat pumps installed between January 1, 2009 and on or before December 31, 2016 qualify for a 30 percent tax credit, including installation and labor costs, with

no upper limit. All ENERGY STAR rated geothermal heat pumps are eligible for the tax credit.

Geothermal heat pumps are similar to ordinary heat pumps, but use the ground instead of outside air to provide heating, air conditioning and hot water. Because they use the earth's natural heat, they have documented efficiencies of up to 400 percent and are among the most efficient heating and cooling technologies available.

Contact your cooperative with any questions about air-source and ground-source heat pumps.

To apply for tax credits, be sure to retain your receipts and your Manufacturer's Certification Statement (manufacturers must certify, in packaging or on the company's website, which products qualify for the tax credit). Claim the credit on your taxes using IRS Form 5695. Consult your accountant or tax professional for more guidance on individual returns.

Source: Touchstone Energy; ENERGY STAR.

**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.

Popular KEEP program provides low-cost training for K-12 teachers



If you live or teach in an area served by Meeker Cooperative Light and Power Assn., McLeod Co-op Power, or Great River Energy, we have an excellent opportunity for you! Great River Energy and its 28 member cooperatives once again will offer Energy Education in the Classroom.

This teacher training course is part of the popular Wisconsin K-12 Energy Education Program (KEEP), which has received positive feedback from teachers since it began in 1997. KEEP and faculty from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point will share their exceptional energy education tools to help teachers easily build energy education into their curriculum.

The course will be held Aug. 2-3 at Great River Energy in Maple Grove, Minn., in

one of the state's most talked about green buildings.

- Great River Energy will provide \$420 scholarships to teachers who live or teach in an area served by Great River Energy
- On the first day of class teachers will pay \$100, which will cover one graduate credit from UWSP and all materials
- Minnesota teachers must apply for reciprocity (a quick, easy online process)
- Teachers will pay for lodging and travel costs

Visit greatriverenergy.com/teachercourse for details and to hear what teachers have to say about the course.

From your curb to your outlet

When people drop trash off for curbside pickup, that's usually the last time they think about it. Not so for the workers at the Elk River Resource Processing Plant. When trash is sent out, that's when their job starts.

Sherburne and Anoka counties deliver municipal solid waste (MSW) to the Elk River Resource Processing Plant. Trucks drop the MSW on the tipping floor, where a grapple crane removes large items that may damage equipment that processes the MSW into refuse-derived fuel. "The Elk River Resource Processing Plant helps Great River Energy literally take what was trash, and turn it into the treasure of electricity," said Facility Manager Tim Steinbeck.

A series of 150-pound hammers and a nine-ton rotor form what's called a flail mill that shreds the MSW into smaller pieces for further processing. Recyclable metal, which makes up approximately 4 percent of MSW, is captured with a magnetic separator and recycled along with



aluminum. Processing continues when a primary and secondary disc screen separate the smaller pieces of MSW to be used as fuel for Great River Energy's Elk River Energy Recovery Station power plant.

About 90 percent of the MSW collected becomes fuel for the plant.

~Great River News

INDUSTRY News

Tallest skyscraper in U.S. to become vertical solar farm

The Sears Tower, renamed the Willis tower, is about to pioneer a kind of crazy-innovative window, one that produces power without obstructing the view or letting in appreciably less sunlight.

At first the Willis tower will only replace windows on the south side of the 56th floor; eventually, the whole south face of the building could be slathered in glorious high-tech energy-generating windows, enough to generate 2 MW of power. The windows have the added benefit of keeping out the excess heat energy that plagues glass buildings.

As incredible as these windows sound, they're only a small part of a larger, \$350 million initiative to reduce electricity consumption of the entire Willis tower by 80 percent. The most visible changes will be noticed on the roofs of the building, which will consist of gardens, solar panels and wind turbines.

~Grist

EPA compliance costly, English warns

NRECA CEO Glenn English said co-ops are concerned about the costs and compressed time frame associated with a massive regulation issued by the Environmental Protection Agency designed to control airborne emissions of mercury and other pollutants.

The rule, issued March 16, would have costs of about \$10.9 billion in 2016 by requiring coal-based power plants to install new pollution control equipment, EPA said. English said co-ops support efforts to protect the public's health and the environment, and added that the association is studying the potential consequences of the 946-page rule. But he cautioned that initial indications suggest compliance, especially for small systems, could be expensive and difficult, in part because of the limited time available to conform to the regulations.

"Electric cooperatives are deeply concerned that the agency's strategy to require very significant emissions reductions of multiple pollutants with very compressed timelines may be unachievable and could damage the economy of rural America without providing commensurate and meaningful environmental benefit," English said.

The standard for mercury, arsenic, chromium and other air toxics comes at a time when EPA is finalizing multiple regulations affecting air pollutants, coal ash, greenhouse gases and other substances, and that flurry of activity could cut against co-ops, English said. "Cooperatives will find themselves at a disadvantage when competing for limited resources to add large emission control projects, or, alternatively, to build replacement generation for units that may be forced to shut down."

~Electric Co-op Today

\$100 off peace of mind!



Sign up for a monitored system by May 31 and receive \$100 off! (Special not valid with other offers.)

If you think security systems are just to keep burglars out, think again. Heartland systems fitted with special sensors detect smoke, water and temperature changes within your home. Furthermore, they can be customized to fit a multitude of applications, including livestock, surveillance, medical, business and more. Call 1-888-264-6380 or visit www.heartlandss.com for more information.

Marathon— Hot Water For Life.



For many people the demands of work and family leave little time for leisure. With busy lives, who has time to deal with a water heater that needs frequent attention and replacement? Today, when people look for reliability and durability—they choose Marathon water heaters.

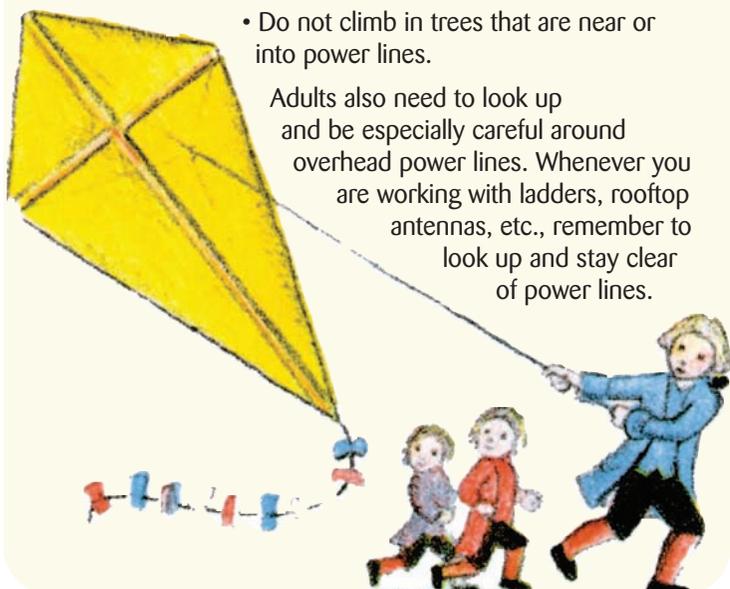


Keep away from power lines!

Spring is here. Kids are outside and we need to remind them of a few safety rules.

- Do not fly kites near power lines.
- Do not climb on or play near green transformer boxes.
- Report any broken locks on or damage to green transformer boxes immediately.
- Do not climb in trees that are near or into power lines.

Adults also need to look up and be especially careful around overhead power lines. Whenever you are working with ladders, rooftop antennas, etc., remember to look up and stay clear of power lines.



School safety programs partner with Dairy Queen



MCPA is presenting electrical safety programs this April and May in area schools. The Cooperative promotes electric safety training to help teach youngsters how to be safe when using electricity and to know how to avoid dangerous situations. Students who participate in the class will receive a voucher from Dairy Queen for a free treat. This is the first year Dairy Queen has partnered with Co-ops statewide to promote electrical safety and efficiency.

Notification feature added to MyMeter™

A new feature has been added to MyMeter that will allow members to receive an e-mail or phone text message when their monthly energy use has exceeded a pre-determined number of kWh threshold. This will be great for snow birds. If your electrical use at your home increases to more than the threshold kWh you determine, you will get a message alerting you. You can then log in to MyMeter and take a look at your daily or monthly usage to see what is going on at home while you are away.



Any member can register for MyMeter. There is no charge or fee to sign up for the service.

Once you are registered, you can go to the account detail screen and click on Notification Settings to put in your e-mail address or cell phone text message number and select your Threshold Settings.

Hundreds of members are monitoring their monthly energy use and using some of the MyMeter features to lower their energy use. To get set up, go to the Co-op's web site www.mcleodcoop.com and click on the MyMeter logo.

Thinking about purchasing a PHEV?



If you make the commitment to drive a Plug-In Hybrid Vehicle (PHEV), you also have the option to charge your vehicle at a reduced rate with our ChargeWise program. ChargeWise is the first-of-its-kind program where qualified members receive up to \$500 for the installation of the ChargeWise outlet and meter — which could easily pay for the entire system.

ChargeWise is a voluntary program offered by McLeod Cooperative Power for qualified members who own a PHEV. The program allows members to charge their PHEV in their garage or carport using electricity from a specially installed

20 amp ChargeWise outlet. This ChargeWise outlet only provides energy during the off-peak hours of 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Members simply plug in their PHEV in the evening and their vehicle is charged during these overnight hours at a reduced rate. They wake up to a fully charged electric vehicle that is ready to run for the day!

Charging electric vehicles during off-peak times, when market prices are low, allows McLeod Cooperative Power to provide low-cost electricity to ChargeWise participants. We can then pass the off-peak, lower-rate on to you.

What will be installed in your garage? To set you up with the ChargeWise program, a state-certified electrician will install a:

- 20 amp ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) circuit
- Meter – provided by your electric cooperative

- Receiver
- 20 amp outlet and wall plate

A state electrical inspector will inspect the work following installation. You will also receive the ChargeWise 20 amp/125v outlet, wall plate and a 25-foot extension cord.

To qualify you must be a Co-op member who lives in our service territory. You must own (not lease) an electric plug-in hybrid vehicle. Electric golf carts, lawn mowers, etc. do not qualify as a vehicle under the ChargeWise program.

Great River Energy will pay for up to \$500 of the installation cost. McLeod Co-op will furnish the meter and receiver for free. Total installation cost is not expected to exceed \$500; however, all circumstances are different and any cost above \$500 is the responsibility of the member. Talk with your electric cooperative prior to installation.

Finally, a good air conditioning solution for homes with no duct work

If your house has no forced air system or duct work, then a mini-split air source heat pump can be a high efficiency way for you to cool your home or parts of your home. Ductless, mini-split-system heat pumps (mini splits) make good retrofit additions to houses with "non-ducted" heating systems, such as hydronic (hot water heat), radiant panels, and space heaters (wood, kerosene, propane). They can also be a good choice for room additions, where extending or installing distribution ductwork is not feasible.

Like standard air-source heat pumps, mini splits have two main components: an outdoor compressor/condenser, and an indoor air-handling unit. A conduit, which houses the power cable, refrigerant tubing, suction tubing, and a condensate drain, links the outdoor and indoor units.

Advantages

The main advantages of mini splits are their small size and flexibility for zoning or heating and cooling individual rooms. Many models can have as many as four indoor air handling units (for four zones or rooms) connected to one outdoor unit. The number depends on how much heating or cooling is required for the building or each zone (which in turn is affected by how well the building is insulated). Since each of the zones will have its own thermostat, you only need to condition that place when someone is there. This will save energy and money.

Ductless mini-split systems are also often easier to install than other types of space conditioning systems. For example, the hook-up between the outdoor and indoor

units generally requires only a three-inch hole through a wall for the conduit. Manufacturers of this type of system can provide a variety of lengths of connecting conduits. If necessary, you can locate the outdoor unit as far away as 50 feet from the indoor evaporator. This makes it possible to cool rooms on the front side of a building house with the compressor in a more advantageous or inconspicuous place on the outside of the building.

Since mini splits have no ducts, they avoid the energy losses associated with ductwork of central forced air systems. Duct losses can account for more than 30 percent of energy consumption for space conditioning, especially if the ducts are in an unconditioned space such as an attic.

In comparison to other add-on systems, mini splits offer more flexibility in interior design options. The indoor air handlers can be suspended from a ceiling, mounted flush into a drop ceiling, or hung on a wall. Floor-standing models are also available. Most indoor units have profiles of about seven inches deep and usually come with sleek, high-tech-looking jackets. Many offer a remote control to make it easier to turn the system on and off when it's positioned high on a wall or suspended from a ceiling.

Split-systems can help to keep your home safer since there is only a small hole in the wall. Through-the-wall and window-mounted room air-conditioners can provide an easy entrance for intruders.

These units qualify for a \$300 rebate from McLeod Co-op Power, if they are an ENERGY STAR rated unit. Their design does not currently allow for operation on the off-peak

Cycled Cooling program but they are still a great option for any home without duct work, as you can have high-efficiency cooling in one to four rooms. They could also be an option for a home that just wants cooling in a certain area of the home.

Disadvantages

The primary disadvantage of mini splits is their cost. Such systems cost about \$1,500 — \$2,000 per ton (12,000 Btu per hour) of cooling capacity. This is about 30 percent more than central systems (not including ductwork) and may cost twice as much as window units of similar capacity.

The installer must correctly size each indoor unit and judge the best location for its installation. Oversized or incorrectly located air-handlers often result in short-cycling, which wastes energy and does not provide proper temperature or humidity control. Too large a system is also more expensive to buy and operate.

Some people may not like the appearance of the indoor part of the system. While less obtrusive than a window room air conditioner, they seldom have the built-in look of a central system. There must also be a place to drain condensate water near the outdoor unit.

Qualified installers and service people for mini splits may not be easy to find. Most conventional heating and cooling contractors have large investments in tools and training for sheet metal duct systems. They need to use (and charge for) these to earn a return on their investment, so they may not recommend ductless systems except where a ducted system would be difficult for them to install.



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

Announcing the 2011 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 below. 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.

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 _____

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 hvaceducation.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 a 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 water heater.....\$200

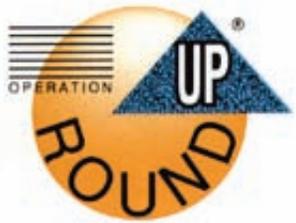
ENERGY STAR Refrigerator with recycling

of old unit\$75

ENERGY STAR Freezer with recycling

of old unit\$75

*(Marathon or equivalent energy rated heater)



Operation Round Up donates \$3,500 to local projects

The MCPA Operation Round Up Trust received 15 applications for funding in 2011. The trust was able to make donations to seven of those applying groups. If we had more members rounding up their electric bills to the nearest dollar, we would have been able to help fund additional projects. Please consider joining Operation Round Up. Projects receiving funding for \$500 were:

- 1) American Cancer Society Renville County Relay for Life – to support programs, education and advocacy for cancer patients and increase cancer research.
- 2) Crow River Habitat for Humanity – to provide affordable housing in McLeod County for those who do not qualify for a conventional loan.
- 3) Gaylord Area Aquatic Center-for the purchase of equipment for the new community swimming pool.
- 4) Girl Scouts of Minnesota & Wisc. River Valleys-to help subsidize cost for girls from McLeod, Sibley and Renville Counties to participate in the girls swim team.
- 5) Lutheran Social Service Senior Nutrition Program-to provide blizzard meals (non-refrigerated meals that do not expire) for senior citizens receiving home-delivered meals so they each have a few meals to eat during bad weather when delivery volunteers cannot get to them.
- 6) Sibley County Food Share, Inc-for building materials, furnishings and equipment for new larger Sibley Co. Food Shelf building.
- 7) Silver Lake Civic Association-to support their community Easter party for kids and to support the building of a pier in front of the assisted living facility into Silver Lake.

Operation Round Up \$25 winners

The Operation Round Up Trust board awarded two \$25 electric bill credits to thank members who have faithfully participated in Operation Round Up. A random drawing was done to select the names of two of the 410 Operation Round Up participants from the past year. Our winners were **Dan Goetze of Arlington and Pearl Schrupp of Norwood**. They will each have a \$25 credit applied to their electric account.

This is also an incentive to encourage more and more members to sign up for Operation Round Up. When added to the change of other participating members, the few cents you donate when your bill is rounded up will help support worthwhile projects in our service area. Just fill out the Operation Round Up application coupon on this page and send it in with your bill. We will get your account set up to help local worthwhile charities. Your Operation Round Up donation is tax deductible and the amount donated shows on your electric bill. Just use your last electric bill of the year as your year-to-date Operation Round Up tax receipt.

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: _____



Let's fill that bus and see what is going on in North Dakota

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, Garrison Dam, North Dakota Heritage Center and Headwaters Fort Mandan Visitors Center (including Fort Mandan, a reconstructed and fully-furnished fort where Lewis & Clark spent a winter). Attendees will go on a drive-through tour of Blue Flint Ethanol which is constructed adjacent to Coal Creek Generating Plant, as well as a scenic tour of other generating facilities in the area.

Cost for adults is \$150 per person. Students 10-18 years of age, who share a room with their parents or grandparents, are \$100 per person. This makes it an affordable mini-vacation. Motor coach transportation, accommodations at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel and most meals are included. The hotel offers an indoor pool, water slide, hot tub and exercise room. The hotel is located across the street from a shopping mall so there is plenty to do during free time.

The group leaves the Cooperative about 8 a.m. on



Tuesday, June 7, and returns to Glencoe about 6 p.m. on Thursday, June 9. Members going on the tour need to be physically able to climb stairs and do a substantial amount of walking. The tour is not suitable for children under 10 years of age.

If you have never been on this tour, we encourage you to sign up. If you have been on the tour before, we will accept your reservation; however, people who have never been to Coal Creek will be given preference. Call the Cooperative at 800-494-6272 to make reservations with your VISA or Mastercard or return the completed form with your check.

Please reserve _____ places for the Coal Creek Tour, June 7 - 9, 2011.

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.