

## Inside this issue...



Storm damage recap and photos

6



Free LED Flashlights at Farmfest

7



Linemen practice safety drills

8

Official publication of



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## Spring flooding forced rescheduling of Coal Creek Tour to August 22-24

*Some open seats are now available. Call to make your reservation today!*

Most of the sites we were scheduled to visit are not under water but many roadway closures would make getting to those sites challenging. Garrison Dam could close to tourists at any time due to the high water dangers and we did not want to take our members into areas that could be ordered to evacuate. Due to the change in dates of the 2011 Coal Creek Tour, some members had to cancel their reservations. That means there are now seats available on the bus for the August 22-24 trip to North Dakota. Members may call today to make their reservation at 1-800-494-6272. It is a great trip including Falkirk Coal Mine, Coal Creek Generating Station, Garrison Dam, the North Dakota Heritage Center, Fort Lincoln and the Headwaters Fort Mandan Visitors Center.

### What is going on in North Dakota?

The Garrison Dam, completed in the 1950's, has never had its spill gates opened to release flood waters before in its history. The spillway gates were opened for the first time in June due to higher than average rainfall across the entire Missouri River Basin. In some areas of Montana and North Dakota, a year's worth of rain fell in two weeks. The mountain snowpack also is starting to melt which will elevate water levels. Any additional rains could make the existing situation worse.

The total release through the spillway gates is supposed to be about 65,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) in addition to the 85,000 cfs which flows through the hydroelectric power house and the regulatory tunnels for a total of 150,000 cfs. The level of Lake Sakakawea is less than 1 foot from breaching the spillway. The Army Corps of Engineers raised the 28 flood gates to control the flow and equalize output between the regulatory tunnels on the west side of the dam and the spillway on the east side.



Aerial view of the Garrison Dam upstream of the Bismarck-Mandan, ND area. The dam is releasing water into the Missouri River at a flow of 140,000 cubic feet per second.

The additional flow of water downstream is causing flooding in neighborhoods in Bismarck and Mandan. There are approximately 2,000 National Guard troops on duty in the Bismarck and Mandan areas, and they have been building an estimated 180 feet per hour of drop bags and other flood protections. It's estimated that about 50 miles of levees have been built in the Bismarck area, and Guard forces will be patrolling and checking each section at least once every two hours.

This same situation is happening on many rivers in the Dakotas, Nebraska and Iowa, and downstream from there. The Missouri River system, which was in a drought condition just a few years ago, is now seeing higher water levels than ever before.

### How is the flood affecting Great River Energy?

Great River Energy has several facilities affected by the recent flooding, including two power plants downstream from the Garrison Dam. Coal Creek Station, a power plant near Underwood, N.D., uses a river water intake on the Missouri River. No problems are anticipated with the high river levels, but a wall of dirt is being built to prevent water from entering the pump house. Employees at Stanton Station, a power plant adjacent to the Missouri River near Stanton, N.D., are diligently keeping watch on the river

water discharge and property embankment. Stanton Station is set up for varying water levels and is not expecting any significant impacts.

Both plants have increased the frequency of inspections of river water intake. Devils Lake in northeastern North Dakota is also filling, which is increasing the surface area of the lake and affecting Great River Energy's 230-kilovolt transmission system located in the area. Line technicians are conducting air patrols and have twice checked the lines this spring. In mid June, Great River Energy employees will check each transmission structure that is in water to evaluate conditions.

Due to the critical demand for volunteers to help with flood disaster relief, preparedness and public safety efforts, Great River Energy offered a Flood Emergency Paid Leave program for employees. Employees were eligible for up to 24 hours of paid time off to aid in the fight against the flood. Great River Energy also donated more than 600 one-ton sandbags and hundreds of pallets for storage and transportation of sand bags at areas affected by the flood. Great River Energy has also made donations to the Salvation Army to support the flood fighting efforts.



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## Spiritwood Station exempted from interstate coal ban

Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton recently signed an energy policy bill, Senate File 1197, into law. The bill included a provision exempting Great River Energy's Spiritwood Station from the restrictions contained in the 2007 Next Generation Energy Act on the importation of electricity from new coal-fired power plants from other states.

As a result of the exemption, Spiritwood Station, which is under construction near Jamestown, N.D., will be able to sell energy in Minnesota without having to offset its emissions.

Spiritwood Station will be 40 to 66 percent efficient, depending on the amount of steam used by the site partners. Most conventional coal-based power plants are 30 to 35 percent efficient.

As expected, Gov. Dayton vetoed Senate File 86, which contained an additional exemption for 1,500 megawatts of coal-fired generation.

### Additional flexibility and reporting

The energy bill also included a provision that would allow cooperatives to request a lower Conservation Improvement Program (CIP) goal from the Division of Energy Resources. The current goal requires all electric and gas utilities to prove energy savings equal to 1.5 percent of annual energy sales.

The provision applies to CIP plans for calendar year 2012 and thereafter. The Division is not required to grant the request. The law also allows large electric and gas customers to petition to be exempt from participating in CIP.

State renewable energy mandates were also addressed in the law. Electric utilities are now required to submit a report to the Legislature estimating the cost impact on wholesale and retail electricity rates from complying with the renewable energy standard.

### Non-Discrimination Statement

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### Quick Tip

Electronics account for about 8.1 percent of your home's energy use each month. Cut costs by plugging items into a power strip and turning the strip off when not in use. "Smart" power strips are another good option – when one master device like a TV is turned off, it cuts power to the other selected items (DVD players, gaming consoles, stereos, etc).

Source: US Department of Energy

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All member story ideas and comments are welcome.  
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# CAPITAL CREDIT CHECKS THAT CAME BACK IN 2011

We are looking for current mailing addresses of the following former Co-op members who had capital credit checks returned to us by the post office in 2011. These were for 1991 revenue and a portion of 2009 revenue. Please notify our office if you have a current mailing address for anyone listed or you may have the consumer below contact us directly. Thank you for your help.

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# Energy efficiency helps Alpha Foods control their bottom line

Ask a dairy farmer what his biggest challenge is and likely he will say “market volatility.” The price of feed and other overhead — compared with the unpredictability of milk prices — make it difficult to hold the bottom line steady.

While price volatility is outside of most farmers’ control, Alpha Foods of Litchfield has “taken the bull by the horns” so to speak, and made changes in one area that they can control — energy use.

Alpha Foods is one of four farms owned by United Dairies, a 9-person partnership responsible for 5,000 cows and 100 employees spread across four locations: Litchfield, Richmond, Sauk Center and Cottonwood.

“We milk about 1,400 cows Alpha Foods” said Nick Ridgeway, former broker and banker who turned in his suit and tie to become part owner and general manager of all four farms. “They are milked three times a day 24/7, so the milking parlor is running constantly.”

“We have about 20 full-time employees here,” said Steve Landwehr, part owner and farm manager of two of the sites, including Alpha Foods.

There’s no doubt that a dairy operation this large uses a lot of energy. Fortunately, Alpha Foods belongs to a rural electric co-op that was able to work with them over the years to reduce their electric use considerably through the following rebate programs:



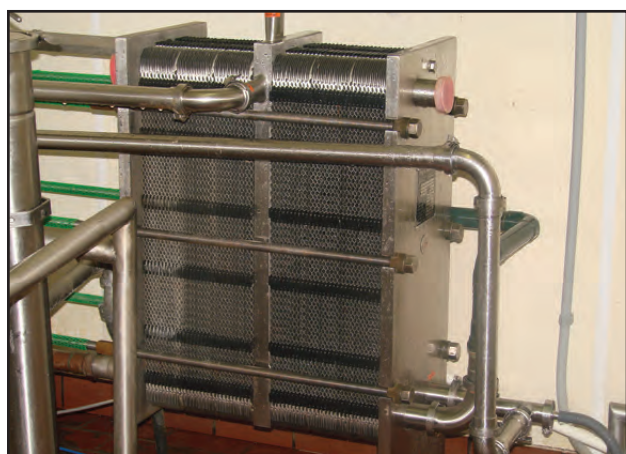
Steve Landwehr and Nick Ridgeway at Alpha Foods. Energy efficiency helps control the bottom line.

## 2003: VFD Milk Pump

About 113,400 pounds of milk (81 lbs per cow per day) is generated daily at Alpha Foods. Since the milking parlor is used around the clock, a lot of electricity is used to power the vacuum pumps used to milk the cows. Before the dairy switched to a variable frequency drive, the pump applied the same suction power whether there were 34 cows being milked, or just four. Once the VFD pump was installed, the suction applied matched the amount of suction needed, based on the number of cows being milked.

“The VFD also reduces hertz (cycle frequency) and noise” Landwehr said.

**Rebate Amount: \$1,038**



Adding a plate cooler means less energy used to cool the milk, and the warmed water is used to water cows and more.

## 2006: Plate Cooler

The switch to a larger and more energy-efficient plate cooler saved the dairy energy. They use fresh water from the well pump to cool the milk to 60-65 degrees. The warmed water is then used to water the cows, and the glycol mixture in the plate cooler brings the milk temperature down to 36 degrees.

**Rebate Amount: \$4,000**



The sand-separation lane run by a variable frequency drive.

## 2009: VFD on Manure Pumps

Alpha Foods uses sand as bedding for their cows to help prevent lameness. When the barn is cleaned, the sand and manure mixture is mixed with recycled water and pumped over a “sand separation lane” or a flat cement surface where the heavier sand settles to the bottom as the liquid manure is carried on to a collection basin. The sand is then cleaned and reused as bedding.

“The VFD pump runs at a lower hertz depending on the level in the manure pit and the amount of water running over the sand separator,” Landwehr said. Rather than running full-bore on a constant basis, the variable speeds allow for considerable energy savings.

**Rebate Amount : \$4,200**

## 2010: VFD Fans in Barn

Approximately 220 fans cool the cow barns at Alpha Foods.

“It used to be we’d turn the fans on in the spring and turn them off in the fall,” Ridgeway said. “With the VFD, the fans

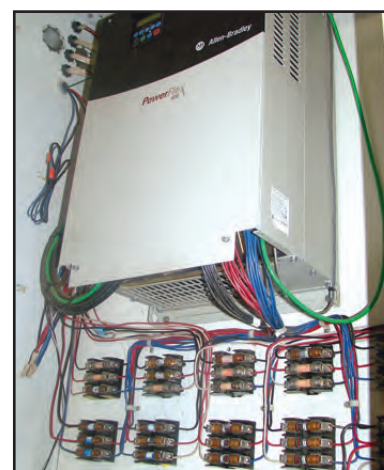
run when it’s hot and when it cools off at night, they power down, which saves a lot of electricity. Just on the fans, we’ll have a pay-back of only a year.”

“It should help the fan motors and bearings to last longer, too,” Landwehr added.

**Rebate: \$3,500**



Alpha Foods just added a second generator. During times of control, they keep milking and receive a special electric rate.



The variable frequency drive system helps the dairy save hertz, energy and money.

Alpha Foods also is on the Co-op’s Gen-Set program, which allows them a lower electric rate provided they purchase at least one generator that can be used during times of scheduled or emergency outages.

“The Co-op has been great to work with,” Ridgeway said. “We’d just tell them what we’re doing and ask if there was a program to help us out.”

“One of the farms didn’t qualify for a rebate, but they made the energy efficiency change anyway because it just makes sense,” Landwehr said.

# Bulbs die differently

*A popping sound or smoke means a CFL's end-of-life mechanism WORKS!*

**W**orried when you hear a compact fluorescent lightbulb (CFL) pop or sizzle? Despite confusion caused by an e-mail hoax circulating since April 2010, these sounds signal the bulb is working safely in its final hours. Smoke, a popping noise, and even a slight odor are typical and do not pose a fire risk as claimed in the misleading e-mail.

According to Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. (UL), an independent not-for-profit firm that tests and sets minimum standards for electric-consuming items, about 130-150 million CFLs are sold every year in the U.S. While the bulbs produce 75 percent less heat than their incandescent cousins, differences between the bulbs go deeper than the amount of heat released. As the first wave of CFLs begins reaching the end of their lifespan, consumers are learning the bulbs die differently, too.



Sometimes the plastic at the base of a CFL will turn black as the bulb dims. This is normal in most cases because safety standards require use of special flame-retardant plastics in the base.

Source: Underwriters Laboratories, Inc.

Most folks know traditional incandescent lightbulbs tend to burn out the same way: a pop, a flash, and, when shaken, the familiar rattle confirming the bulb needs to be changed. With CFLs, light dims over time and the lamp may produce a more dramatic pop, emit a distinct odor, and even release some

smoke. Sometimes the plastic at the base of a CFL will turn black, which is normal in most cases as safety standards require application of special flame-retardant plastics.

“CFLs are one of the products we regularly test to specific requirements for electrical safety, fire, and shock hazards,” Drengenberg notes. “Any popping sounds or smoke that a consumer might see when a CFLs burns out means that the bulb’s end-of-life mechanism worked as it should have.”

Consumers should look for the UL mark on packaging when purchasing CFLs. That is your guarantee that the product has been rigorously tested.

For more information, visit [www.SafetyAtHome.com](http://www.SafetyAtHome.com).

Source: Underwriters Laboratories

# INDUSTRY

News

## NRC issues rare statement on nuclear plant safety

**T**he Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a rare "For the Record" statement intended to [calm] public fears about nuclear plant safety in the aftermath of the March 11 earthquake and nuclear disaster in Fukushima, Japan. Such statements are unusual and are used when the agency wants to set the record straight, said Lara Uselding, NRC spokeswoman. It was prompted by thousands of messages, many of them nearly identical, that the NRC received questioning the ability of nuclear plants to withstand severe natural events and asking for "immediate inspections."

The statement focuses on the two California plants. Diablo Canyon and San Onofre are designed to withstand quakes of 7.5 and 7.0 magnitude respectively. The main difference between the plant in Japan and the California plants is the fact that the Japanese plant is near a subduction zone, a type of earthquake fault that produces the biggest quakes and large tsunamis, the statement said. The faults around Diablo Canyon are of the strike-slip variety.

The NRC has also established a senior level task force that will look for lessons to be learned from the Japanese disaster. A report from the task force is due in July.

~McClatchy



**A Heartland Security system makes it that easy...**

Be safe with the touch of a button. Heartland Security System key fobs turn the system on and off for easy entrance and activation. Plus, their panic feature quickly call assistance, if needed.

If you think security systems are just to keep burglars out, think again. Heartland systems fitted with special sensors can help detect smoke, water and temperature

changes within your home. Furthermore, Heartland systems do more than just sound the alarm. They automatically notify the authorities in the event of an emergency. They can also be customized to fit a multitude of applications, including livestock, surveillance, medical and more. Call 1-888-264-6380 with questions or visit [www.heartlandss.com](http://www.heartlandss.com) for more information.



\*Certain restrictions apply. May not be combined with any other offers.

## The future of lighting is here!

**I**n 2007, the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) was signed into law. One of the provisions establishes efficiency standards for several types of light bulbs. Today's 40W, 60W, 75W, and 100W general service incandescent light bulbs do not meet these new efficiency standards. This is important to you, the consumer, because lighting accounts for about 12% of the energy use in homes.

Incandescent bulbs will be phased out as follows:

100 watt bulbs.....	2012
75 watt bulbs.....	2013
60 watt bulbs.....	2014
40 watt bulbs.....	2014

When replacing your incandescent bulbs, use the guide below to achieve equivalent light:

Incandescent	Halogen	CFL	LED
100W.....	70-72W	23-26W	N/A
75W.....	53W	18-20W	N/A
60W.....	43W	13-15W	12W
40W.....	28-29W	10-11W	8-9W

Source: National Electrical Manufacturers Association ([www.nemasavesenergy.org](http://www.nemasavesenergy.org))

## Atop TV sets...a power drain that runs 24/7

**T**hose little boxes that usher cable signals and digital recording capacity into televisions have become the single largest electricity drain in many American homes, with some typical home entertainment configurations eating more power than a new refrigerator and even some central air-conditioning systems. There are 160 million so-called set-top boxes in the United States, one for every two people, and that number is rising. Many homes now have one or more basic cable boxes as well as add-on DVRs, or digital video recorders, which use 40 percent more power than the set-top box. One high-definition DVR and one high-definition cable box use an average of 446 kilowatt hours a year, about 10 percent more than a 21-cubic-foot energy-efficient refrigerator, a recent study found.

These set-top boxes are energy hogs mostly because their drives, tuners and other components are generally running full tilt, or nearly so, 24 hours a day, even when not in active use. The recent study, by the Natural Resources Defense Council, concluded that the boxes consumed \$3 billion in electricity per year in the United States — and that 66 percent of that power is wasted when no one is watching and shows are not being recorded. That is more power than the state of Maryland uses over 12 months.

~New York Times

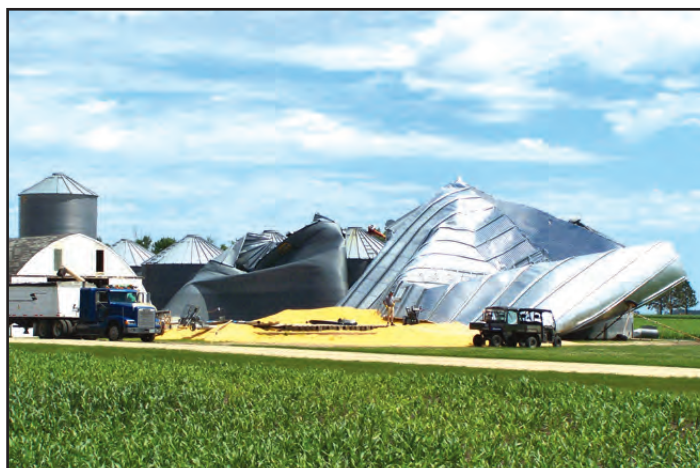
# Thank you for your patience following July 1 storm

## *It was largest outage for MCPA in past years*

**T**he storm that moved across Minnesota Friday night, July 1, caused extensive damage and widespread power outages from the South Dakota border to Wisconsin. As it moved through MCPA's service area it caused the greatest damage and most outages in a swath from Bird Island to Hutchinson. However, winds also caused hundreds of individual and line outages throughout most of the Co-op's service area.

Initially, five substations lost power due to a transmission outage. This put more than half of the Co-op's consumers in the dark. All of those substations had power restored on Friday evening. Several feeders from Helen Sub near Glencoe and Hook Lake Sub near Hutchinson were knocked out, keeping hundreds of members in the dark until early Saturday morning. Members that remained without power on Saturday or Sunday had lines down or damage to equipment either at their residence or on a line feeding their neighborhood. These are the outages that take the longest to repair. Trees needed to be removed, and lines or equipment repaired or replaced. That all takes time. And it may only result in one or a few consumers getting their lights back on. Crews worked on these outages through Monday, July 4. Power line contractors were hired to rebuild a line of more than 30 poles that went down south of Hector and another 70-plus transmission poles that went down near the Brookfield Sub, several miles north of Hector. Construction on the transmission line will continue for one to two weeks.

Linemen from the Hutchinson Municipal Utilities, Legacy Construction, Highline Construction, and Carr's Tree Service assisted MCPA line workers to get everyone back on. We are grateful to these many workers who gave up their holiday weekend plans to come help us restore power to our members.



**Corn clean up was underway after a bin north of Hector was destroyed.**



**Line foreman Dan Schade, Grant Miller, and Curt Hanson use the system map to get instructions from Line Superintendent Mark Walford on areas they would be restoring power.**



**MCPA crews fix wires tangled by the storm.**



**Member's shed damaged by wind.**



**Great River Energy unloads new transmission poles south of the Brookfield Sub. Over 70 new poles will be needed to replace a two-mile stretch of poles destroyed by high winds.**



**Employees of Legacy Construction of Sauk Center put cross arms and hardware on a new pole south of Hector.**



**Pole snapped off but was still hanging in line on Hwy. 16.**



**Broken pole north of Hector, one in a line of 70 poles that went down.**



**THE Largest Outdoor Agricultural Event in Minnesota!**

- Connects 40,000+ attendees with over 550 local and leading companies in the farming industry.
- Features highly topical educational and political forums highlighting topics relevant to the issues that face today's farmers.
- Presents successful field demonstrations which feature the latest technological advancements in the farming industry.

- Offers programs and entertainment for the entire family.

Farmfest strives to provide both the traditional programs that bring attendees back year after year while also offering new dynamic events and programs which are designed both to entertain and entice new attendees. Join us for the 30th Annual Farmfest, August 2-4, 2011 at the Gilfillan Estate in Redwood County, Minnesota.

As a trusted resource with 30 years of proven credibility, Farmfest connects industry leading manufacturers/providers with decision making producers. Visit the Co-op booth #2301 in the Ag tent.

**Farmfest Hours** – Tues – 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.,  
Wed – 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.,  
Thurs – 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Admission \$10 per person – 18 and under are FREE! FREE PARKING

Use this Farmfest Coupon to receive a FREE LED Flashlight compliments of your Cooperative!

Farmfest—August 2-4, 2011  
**Light up your nights with a LED Flashlight!**

Redeem this coupon at booth # 2301 in the Ag Tent on August 2—4, 2011 for your FREE LED Flashlight.



**Ten Energy-Saving Tips Guaranteed to Lower Your Energy Bill This Summer**

**Key Points**

- Air-conditioning accounts for 16% of annual energy costs for the average home.
- Have your unit inspected annually by a qualified professional and install a programmable thermostat.
- Proper insulation and selective landscaping can save on energy costs all year long.

As the temperature rises, thoughts of those high summer cooling bills put many homeowners into a cold sweat. After all, the U.S. Department of Energy estimates that summer air conditioning accounts for more than 16% of annual energy spending in the average home.

**As summer approaches, there are some low-cost steps that you can take to help keep your home comfortable and to help lower your energy bills.**

- 1 If you have not already done so, have your air-conditioner checked by a qualified professional. Servicing typically includes cleaning, a check on refrigerant levels, the compressor, hoses, and the thermostat.
- 2 Turn up your thermostat—set the thermostat at 78°F when you are at home and up to 85°F when you will be away. A programmable

thermostat is an excellent way to save energy and maintain home comfort year-around.

- 3 Make sure your thermostat is not located near lamps or electronic appliances. It can sense heat from these devices and make your air-conditioner run longer.
- 4 Replace air conditioner filters—dirty filters restrict air flow and cause your system to run longer, thus wasting energy. Replace your filter at least once per month.
- 5 Weather-strip, seal, and caulk leaky doors and windows and install foam gaskets behind outlet covers.
- 6 On warm, sunny days, keep window coverings closed to prevent solar heat gain.
- 7 Use ceiling or room fans in occupied rooms. These will get air moving and help to reduce the temperature.
- 8 Have the windows in your home tinted. Tinting is effective at blocking the rays of the sun from reflecting through the glass of your windows and into your home.
- 9 Install a whole house fan. These devices circulate cool air throughout your house and exhaust hot air out of the attic.



**10** If your air conditioning unit is older, consider replacing it with a newer, more efficient model. Make sure and purchase a product that is ENERGY STAR certified for energy-efficient performance.

**Why Stop There?**

While ten is a good number, it is no reason to stop saving on energy costs. There are a variety of other ways that you can save energy in the summer and all year long.

- Make sure that your home is properly insulated. This will reduce energy costs and keep you comfortable in summer and winter.
- Plant leafy shade trees around the South and West corners of your home. Trees will keep the hot sunlight away from your home in the summer to reduce cooling costs. Trees also lose their leaves for winter when you need that sunlight to help heat your home.

While summer presents a number of unique opportunities to make your home more energy efficient, it is important to remember that conservation is a year-round effort.

## Efficient equipment needs quality installation

When you take a new piece of energy-efficient equipment out of the box, it's finely tuned to perform a task with as little energy as possible. Installation practices can affect that efficiency in both a positive and negative way.

When pursuing home energy efficiency, it is vital that equipment be installed properly. That's why McLeod Cooperative Power offers rebates to members who hire certified installers for new central air conditioners and air-source heat pumps.

In order to generate maximum electric energy savings, equipment must be installed correctly and according to manufacturer's specifications. Certified installers are trained to validate four components of the installation:

- Proper sizing
- Air flow
- Refrigerant charge
- Duct sealing

New central air conditioners and air-source heat pumps with an overall efficiency of 13 SEER or higher are eligible for rebates. In addition, the system must be matched, which means the outdoor condenser unit and the indoor evaporator coil must work together to provide top performance and maximum efficiency.

Contact McLeod Cooperative Power or visit [http://hvacaducation.net/gre/public\\_search.cfm](http://hvacaducation.net/gre/public_search.cfm) to find a certified installation professional nearby. This link is also on the Partners page of the Co-op's web site at [www.mcleodcoop.com](http://www.mcleodcoop.com)



## Linemen practice safety drills

MCPA line workers practiced pole top rescue and bucket rescue exercises at a recent safety training session. The session was taught by Minnesota Rural Electric Association.

## ENERGY STAR rebate program for 2011



GE Consumer Products

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 [hvacaducation.net](http://hvacaducation.net) web site. A list of all "registered contractors" in Minnesota is on our Cooperative web site at [www.mcleodcoop.com](http://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

<b>Ground Source Heat Pumps</b> (controlled or uncontrolled)	
Residential .....	\$400/ton
Commercial .....	\$400/ton
<b>Air Source Heat Pump</b>	
13 SEER .....	\$330
14 SEER .....	\$480
15 SEER .....	\$580
16 SEER or higher .....	\$630
<b>Ductless Air Source Heat Pump</b> .....	\$300

<b>Central Air Conditioner</b>	
13 SEER .....	\$ 30
14 SEER .....	\$180
15 SEER .....	\$280
16 SEER or higher .....	\$330
<b>Storage Space Heating</b> .....	\$ 40/kW
<b>Uncontrolled electric water heater</b> going on the Storage Water Heating with high efficiency water heater* .....	\$200
<b>Storage Water Heating* (New constr.)</b> .....	\$100
<b>4 hour peak shave to Storage Water Heating*</b> .....	\$100
<b>Heat pump water heater (New constr.)</b> .....	\$100
<b>Heat pump water heater replacing non-controlled electric</b> .....	\$200
<b>ENERGY STAR Refrigerator with recycling of old unit</b> .....	\$75
<b>ENERGY STAR Freezer with recycling of old unit</b> .....	\$75

\*(Marathon or equivalent energy rated heater)