

Inside this issue...



2012 Cooperative Calendar

Free scenic calendars while they last **2**



Randy Ahrndt retires after 20 years with Co-op **3**

					Elkswirth	Collins	Victor	Wood	Franklin
	East Lake				3				
	4								

Nominating Committee needed for Districts 4, 5 and 6 **8**

Official publication of



www.mcleodcoop.com

Holiday Treats for members visiting the office December 15



The Cooperative invites its members to stop in the office for coffee, apple cider, and cookies December 15 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free scenic calendars will be available to members while supplies last. Our employees will be available to help answer all of your energy management, billing and other questions.

Capital credits applied to December bills

Members of McLeod Cooperative Power Association (MCPA) may notice lower electric bills in December. A total of \$491,804 is being distributed this month in capital credit refunds. This amount includes all remaining capital credits from 1992 and 20% of operating margins allocated from 2010.

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



Experience Washington D.C.

Time for high school juniors and seniors to apply

High school juniors and seniors have until March 5, 2012, to apply for the Cooperative's Washington Youth Tour competition. One local youth will win an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington D.C. June 16-21, 2012, from the Cooperative.

For more than 40 years, electric cooperatives have sponsored the annual Rural Electric Youth Tour by sending their high school students to experience first hand the essence that is our republic. An information packet is available upon request to any high school junior or senior. Just call the Co-op at 800-494-6272. You will have until March 5, 2012, to submit your application. Students complete a questionnaire and application to qualify. Please encourage your child or grandchild to apply. They need only attend a high school in or reside in McLeod, Renville, Sibley or western Carver County.

Former Co-op Manager Randall F. Owen passed away in November



Randall "Randy" Owen passed away following a difficult battle with cancer on November 8, 2011. Randy was 66 years old. He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Faye Owen, three grown children and several grandchildren.

Randy Owen was employed at McLeod Co-op Power for 36 years. He started with the Co-op as an Accountant in 1971 and was promoted to Office

Manager in 1978. Randy served as Assistant General Manager 1989-90 and took over as General Manager in 1991. The last 15 years at the Co-op Randy served as General Manager, retiring April 15, 2007. He and Faye had retired to their lake home at Merrifield, MN.

The Cooperative extends its sympathy to the Owen family.

The employees and directors of McLeod Cooperative Power wish you and your family a blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year.



Our offices will be closed Friday, Dec. 23, Monday, Dec. 26 and Tuesday, Jan. 2 so our employees may spend the holidays with their families. For outages or electrical emergencies call 1-800-927-5685.



2012 Cooperative Calendar

Scenic calendars available while supplies last

Scenic calendars for 2012 are available in the Cooperative office while supplies last. They include photos from around Minnesota taken by employees of McLeod Cooperative Power and Kandiyohi Power Cooperative.

Manager's Message —

by Kris Ingenthron, General Manager
McLeod Cooperative Power Association



Helping to create jobs

In the past six months, how many times have you heard the words, "We need to create jobs" by our elected officials? President Obama, other elected officials, local government, and our own economic development groups have all made this statement at one time or the other. What you may not know is that McLeod Cooperative Power Association continuously works with local communities and businesses in support of their growth and expansion projects within their organizations. The Co-op has secured USDA loan funds for area business projects and several years ago received a USDA grant that turned into a revolving loan fund as project recipients make their monthly loan payments.

During the past 10 years, McLeod Cooperative Power has provided over \$900,000.00 to support start up or expansion projects. We have an Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund available to help local businesses in their ventures. Our work is primarily behind the scenes in helping these organizations, which in turn helps to develop jobs within the

local communities. We have helped finance a manufacturing plant, grocery store, and bakery.

Our most recent project was to assist the ATHC (Adult Training & Habilitation Center) in their new building project in Watertown, Minnesota. This project consisted of building a recycling center that initially created four full-time positions and 22 part-time positions. Nearly all of the part-time positions were filled by disabled adults within the area. In less than one year, they have added a second shift, hired one full-time employee and filled five more part-time positions. This project came to fruition with the help of many people and financial institutions. We are extremely proud that we were able to be a part of this great project as well.

You might be thinking about now, "Why would my electric cooperative be helping with economic development?" The answer is simple. It is beneficial for McLeod Cooperative Power Association's future success to help our communities grow. It not

only helps to create jobs, but it provides a livable wage for these employees. Certain projects may increase our energy sales and grow our membership. The wages earned are spent locally and keep our local communities viable.

So the next time you hear someone say, "We need to create more jobs" just remember that your Cooperative is playing a small part in helping to create jobs locally and helping businesses to sustain their presence in our communities.

On behalf of all the employees and the Board of Directors at MCPA, best wishes to you and your families for a joyous holiday season and a safe and healthy New Year.

Cooperatively Yours,

PURPA policy information available upon request

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

District 1

Oria Brinkmeier, *Lester Prairie*

District 2

Dale Peters, Secretary-Treasurer
Brownston

District 3

Roger Karstens, *Hutchinson*

District 4

Doug Kirtz, Vice President
Hector

District 5

Allan Duesterhoeft, *Hutchinson*

District 6

Lester Ranzau
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 NEWS

USPS 2220

Periodicals Postage Paid at Hutchinson, MN
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
McLeod Cooperative Power News
P O Box 70, Glencoe, MN 55336-0070

The *McLeod Cooperative Power News* is published monthly for \$5 per year for members and \$8 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 Cooperative 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

Randy Ahrndt retires from MCPA

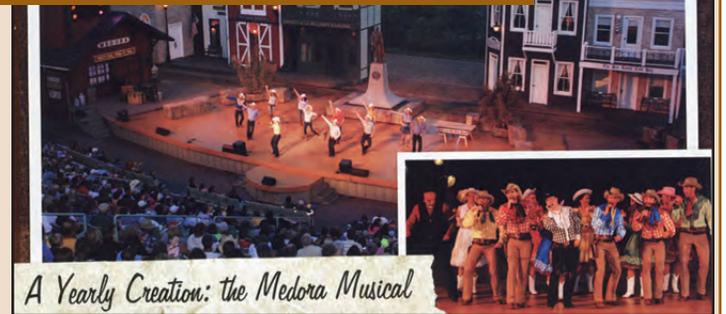
Randy Ahrndt worked at McLeod Cooperative Power for 20 years, serving as Office Manager. Randy oversaw the human resource functions, insurance and benefits, as well as supervision of the financial services. Randy's office duties have been turned over to current employees Jan Sanderson and Pat Gavin. Jan will serve as Financial Services Manager and Pat has taken over the Human Resource duties.

Before coming to McLeod Co-op Power, Randy Ahrndt held accounting or office manager positions at rural electric cooperatives in Benson, MN and Custer, SD and in the private sector.

McLeod Co-op Power appreciates Randy's 20 years of dedicated service and we wish him the best in his retirement. Randy and his wife, Linda, reside on a farm near Litchfield where he raises a variety of livestock.

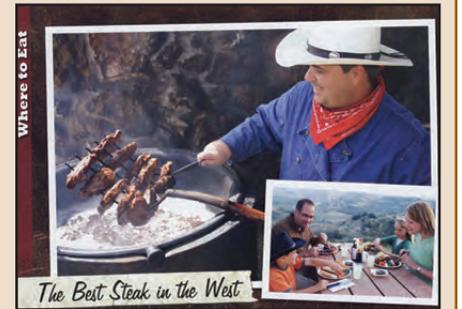


Coal Creek Tour to include Medora Musical & Pitchfork Fondue in 2012



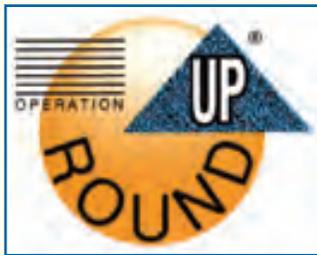
A Yearly Creation: the Medora Musical

The Coal Creek Tour is scheduled for August 20-22, 2012. Coal Creek Generation Station, Falkirk Coal Mine and Garrison Dam are again on the itinerary, but added to the tour this year is a trip to Medora. Participants will spend a night in Medora, take in the Medora Musical and eat at the Pitchfork Fondue experience.



The Best Steak in the West

Cost will be \$300 per person double occupancy or \$400 per person single occupancy. If any members are interested, we are starting to take reservations. Call the Co-op at 1-800-494-6272 and ask for Katie.



Operation Round Up donation applications are being accepted until March 1

Community and civic groups, emergency responders and other non-profit organizations are welcome to apply to McLeod Cooperative Power's Operation Round Up Trust for donation assistance. The trust is able to donate funds to worthy local projects in McLeod, Renville, Sibley or McLeod Counties.

Funding is from the generosity of electric cooperative members who round up their electric bills. Application forms are available by calling the Cooperative at 1-800-494-6272. Applications for funding must be completed and returned to the Cooperative by March 1, 2012.

Make The SWITCH LED Christmas light strings eligible for \$2 rebate

Turn in your old lights and get up to \$10 off new LED light strings instantly

To get members to decorate their homes — both indoors and outdoors — with the very efficient LED (Light Emitting Diode) lights, the Cooperative is offering a rebate of \$2 per string of lights.

The three participating hardware stores in our service area are: Hutchinson ACE Hardware, Hite Hardware in Glencoe and Home Solutions in Norwood Young America. The rebate offer is available only to McLeod Cooperative Power members November 1 through December 24, 2011 or while light supplies last. Each member may use this coupon in the newsletter to get the \$2 per string rebate on up to five strings of LED holiday lights, for a maximum rebate of \$10 per member. Save this coupon because reproductions will not be accepted!

LED Christmas lights come in mini-light sizes, icicle lights, larger C6 lights (sized like the larger outdoor lamps used 20 years ago), LED rope light and many other varieties. They can be used indoors or outdoors. LED strings use 90% less energy than a string of mini-bulbs. They last 50,000 to 100,000 hours. They are safer and are cool to the touch. If one bulb goes out, the rest stay lit. They also are sturdier and more difficult to damage. Many even come with a lifetime or multi-year warranty. LED light strings are the best and most efficient way to decorate for Christmas or any holiday.

YOU MUST FOLLOW THESE STEPS CAREFULLY TO GET YOUR REBATE:

1. Cut out the coupon from your October newsletter or contact the Co-op if you no longer have your coupon.
2. Take the coupon and up to 5 old strings of holiday lights to one of the hardware stores listed on the coupon.
3. Purchase one to five strings of LED Christmas lights that have at least 50 bulbs per string.
4. Present your completed coupon at the checkout with your old strings to get \$2 off each string you are purchasing, up to a maximum rebate of \$10 per member.

If members purchase ENERGY STAR LED holiday light strings from a different retailer than these three participating stores and want to receive the rebate, they must bring five old strings of lights to the Co-op, and give us a sales receipt for their light purchase along with the completed rebate form. These alternate rebates will be accepted through December 27, 2011. A credit for the rebate amount will be applied to the next electric bill.

Holiday light recycling program

Announcing a holiday light recycling program that will give local residents a place to get rid of their holiday light strings, where their components will be recycled. And best of all, the recycling service is providing jobs to local disabled persons via Adult Training and Habilitation Center (ATHC), located in Winsted and Hutchinson. Co-op members and the general public may drop their light strings into recycling boxes located at McLeod Co-op Power, ACE Hardware in Hutchinson, Hite Hardware in Glencoe, or Home Solutions in Norwood Young America and a variety of other locations where ATHC has set up collection boxes. There is no charge to drop off light strings. Old electrical, appliance and telephone cords are also accepted. Only battery chargers and adapters are not accepted. All the old holiday light strings brought in by members when they participate in the \$2 rebate for new LED holiday light strings will be recycled through this program.

Coupon was available in the October newsletter

Shopping for Lights? Look for Lumens, Not Watts

When you're shopping for light bulbs, compare lumens to be sure you're getting the amount of light, or level of brightness, you want. A new Lighting Facts Label will make it easy to compare bulb brightness, color, life, and estimated annual operating cost.

Buy Lumens, Not Watts

We typically buy things based on how much of it we get, right? When buying milk, we buy it by volume (gallons) so why should lighting be any different? But for decades, we have been buying light bulbs based on how much energy they consume (watts), not how much light they give us (lumens). With the arrival of new, more efficient light bulbs, it's time for that to change.

What's a Lumen?

Lumens measure how much light you are getting from a bulb. More lumens means a brighter light; fewer lumens a dimmer light. Lumens are to light what pounds are to bananas or gallons are to milk—they let you buy the amount of light you want. So when buying new bulbs, think lumens, not watts.

The brightness, or lumen levels, of lights in your home may vary widely, so here's a rule of thumb:

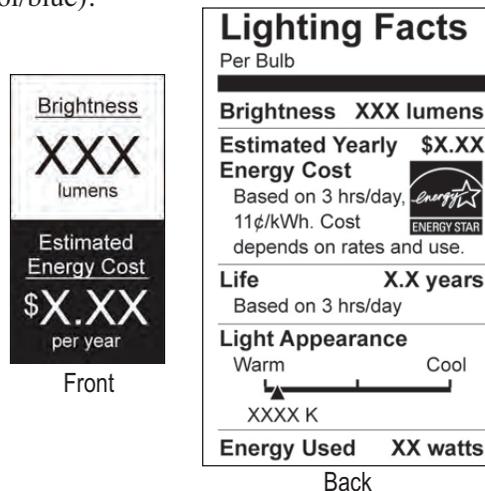
- To replace a 100-W traditional incandescent bulb, look for a bulb that gives you about 1,600 lumens. If you want something dimmer, go for less lumens; if you prefer brighter light, look for more lumens.
- Replace a 75-W bulb with an energy-saving bulb that gives you about 1,100 lumens.

- Replace a 60-W bulb with an energy-saving bulb that gives you about 800 lumens.
- Replace a 40-W bulb with an energy-saving bulb that gives you about 450 lumens.

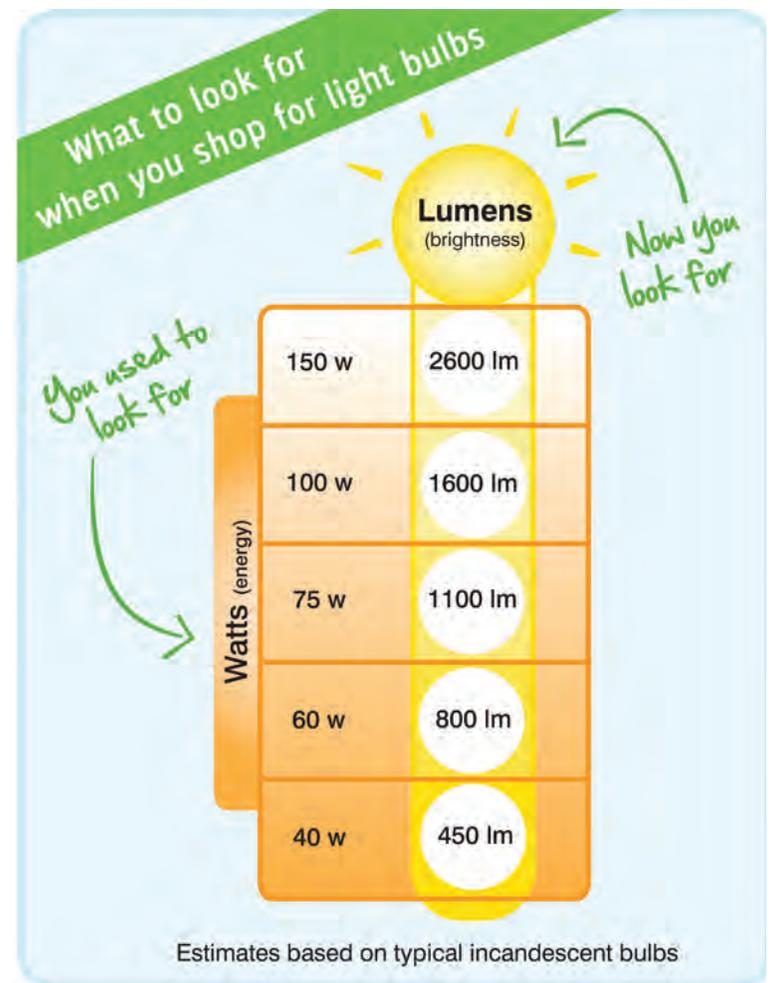
What Should I Look For? The Lighting Facts Label

To help consumers better understand the switch from watts to lumens, the Federal Trade Commission will require a new product label for light bulbs starting in January 2012. The labels will help consumers buy bulbs that are right for them.

Like the helpful nutrition label on food products, the Lighting Facts Label will help consumers understand what they are really purchasing. The label clearly provides the lumens—or brightness—of the bulb, estimated operating cost for the year, and the color of the light (from warm/yellowish, to white to cool/blue).



The Federal Trade Commission created a new, mandatory light bulb packaging label in 2010 to help consumers understand light output and how much energy each bulb uses. The labels will also make it easier to compare bulbs. By January 1, 2012, all new light bulbs will carry this label. Source: FTC



To learn more about lighting options and other ways to save energy at home, visit www.energysavers.gov or TogetherWeSave.com.

Source: Energy Savers, U.S. Department of Energy

Follow these tips to using your space heaters wisely

- Keep the heater at least 3 feet from flammable items such as curtains, furniture, or bedspreads.
- Select a space heater with a guard around the heating element.
- When buying a heater, choose one that has been tested and certified by a nationally recognized testing institution such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL).
- Buy a heater that can handle the area that you want to heat.
- Read and follow the manufacturer's operating instructions.
- Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
- Never leave a space heater unattended.
- Never go to sleep with a space heater on.
- Never use or store flammable liquids near a space heater.
- Do not use a heater in a bathroom—it's a high-moisture area that could cause damage.
- Keep heaters away from water to prevent electrocution.
- Do not use an extension cord with a space heater.
- Do not use the heater to dry clothes.
- Be sure the heater's plug fits snugly in an outlet. The cord and plug may feel warm when operating since the unit draws so much power, but they should not feel hot. If they do, unplug the heater and have a qualified repair person check for problems.
- Do not attempt to repair a broken heater yourself. It should be checked and repaired by a qualified appliance service center.

Space heaters will likely result in higher electric bills

Space heaters that claim to save you money on your heating bill are misleading you. Anytime you add an additional heating source, your cost will go up. Using an electric space heater will cause an increase on your electric bill. How much depends on frequency and duration of use. The only way a space heater will save you money is if you turn down your home's primary heating source significantly and use your space heater to only heat the room you are occupying. This will likely result in loss of comfort in



the rest of your home. Space heaters also add to the Co-op's peak, resulting in higher wholesale power costs which are then passed on to you, the member.

If you have questions about heating products or services to save money on your bill, contact our Energy Management Technicians.

Source: The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSA)

Taking a vacation to North Dakota? Check this out!



As a member of one of Great River Energy's distribution cooperatives, you can tour Coal Creek Station, near Underwood, North Dakota. Tours are for immediate family members only (and all participants must be 10 years of age or older).

NOTE: The tour includes limited walking on stairs, and some walking over open grating. Reservations are required to tour the power plant. To schedule a tour, please call Lyndon Anderson (701-442-7036) or Rachel Retterath (701-442-7077).

INDUSTRY

News

Minnesota's mining pits could boost wind power

Minnesota researchers may have unearthed a new use for abandoned mining pits on the state's Iron Range: Wind power storage. It's one of the oldest and most widely used methods for storing energy. Cheap or excess electricity, such as nighttime wind power, is used to pump water uphill from a lake or reservoir into a higher-elevation holding pond. When electricity demand is higher, the energy is recaptured by reversing the flow and sending water through hydro turbines on its way back down.

The earliest pumped-hydro systems were built in Italy and Switzerland in the 1890s. Today, there's 125 gigawatts of pumped-hydro capacity worldwide, a little less than one-fifth of which is in the United States. Most of the 40 or so U.S. pumped-hydro facilities were built over the course of a few decades beginning in the 1960s to help coal or nuclear plants run at a constant rate, which is more efficient, rather than ramping up and down to meet demand. Wind often picks up at night, when electricity demand is lower. Pumped-hydro would allow utilities to store that energy until the next day, when more customers need it and it's less likely to go to waste.

~Midwest Energy News

Pilot programs show energy savings

A Minnesota electric cooperative is reporting early favorable results from two pilot programs in which members tested the energy and cost savings of heat pump water heaters and various swimming pool pump strategies. In the heat pump water heater pilot at Connexus Energy, Ramsey, Minn., energy use dropped about 67 percent compared to straight electric resistance heaters. Participants in the swimming pool pilots saved about 2,000 kilowatt-hours this summer, and peak demand was reduced by 1.4-1.8 kw per pool.

The goal of the heat pump water heater test was "to determine how well they perform in northern climates and determine if they could play a role in promoting electric technology strategies," said Bruce Saylor, regulatory and government affairs manager at the co-op. Feedback from participants was "overwhelmingly positive," Saylor said. Members said they ran their dehumidifiers less, and while room temperatures dropped, people were still comfortable.

That last part is the key, Saylor said. He recounted one member commenting, "This reason alone is why I would recommend it. My wife has not complained once about the quality of the hot water."

~Electric Co-op Today



PROTECT WHAT MATTERS MOST

Protect your home and family against:

- Break In
- Fire Damage
- Frozen Pipes
- Flooded Basement
- Smoke Damage
- Sump Pump Failure
- Power Failure
- Carbon Monoxide

A subsidiary of:



www.heartlandss.com 888.264.6380

State surveys renewable energy's costs

In 2007, Minnesota passed a law that required all the state's electric utilities to fulfill a quarter of their energy needs with renewable resources by 2025. Although the final goal is more than a decade away, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission recently requested that utilities report requirement's cost or benefit to consumers.

Great River Energy reported that in 2010 the estimated wholesale rate impact of the Renewable Energy Standard (RES) requirement to Great River Energy's members was \$22 million. That amounts to \$0.002 per kilowatt-hour (kWh), which means that a home using 1,000 kWh per month would pay an additional \$24 every year as a result of the RES.

The report included costs associated with renewable generation from wind and biomass as well as administrative and transmission costs. Great River Energy's primary reason for higher costs is that its cost of purchasing wind energy was higher than the value of that energy, on average, during the times of production.

Until energy market prices recover from the recent lows, renewable energy is expected to continue to be a cost to Great River Energy. However, if prices rebound renewable resources could become economical.

"At this point, the environmental benefits of wind energy are coming at a cost to our members," said Great River Energy Member Services Vice President Jon Brekke. "The impacts could grow as we ramp up to the full 25 percent goal by 2025, but this depends on many complex factors including future market conditions."

These costs are not unique to Great River Energy. Other utilities also reported on RES impacts using various calculation methods. As a result of the various methods and unique resource portfolios, there was wide variation in reported cost impacts.

Great River Energy's existing renewable energy resources (including wind and biomass) will ensure that the Cooperative remains compliant with Minnesota's RES through at least 2020.

Great River Energy invested early in wind generation in an effort to claim the best sites for wind resources and transmission access. Existing projects have also benefited from federal tax incentives which are scheduled to expire at the end of 2012.

How many "phantom" energy hogs do you have in your house?



Even though people have become more conscientious about how they use power, many homes are still filled with electronic appliances that are "vampire" or "phantom" energy hogs. These phantom products draw power 24 hours a day, whether on or off. They draw stand-by power when turned off. Stand-by power is electricity used by appliances and equipment while they are switched off or not providing their primary function, such as the black cubes that convert AC into DC power or the circuits needed to send a remote signal, soft keypads and displays including miscellaneous LED status lights.

While a single device consumes very little in annual electricity use, when multiplied by several dozen products, you're no longer talking about a little change. A typical U.S. home has 40 products constantly drawing power. Together, these electronics amount to almost 7% of national residential electricity use. Altogether, stand-by power use is roughly responsible for 1% of global energy consumption.

A variety of things can be done to lower or eliminate this "phantom" usage. Use a switchable power strip to disconnect power to clusters of electronic products or purchase energy saver power strips for your electronic equipment. These products can be purchased at almost any hardware or electronics store. Low power consuming products keep the stand-by power consumption at a minimum. You could also use a watt meter to measure the devices in your home and take targeted action. (Watt meters are available for 3-week rental from McLeod Co-op Power).

If all else fails, pull the plug. Many electronic products in our homes are left plugged in all the time and are simply not needed. Let's take the typical cell phone charger for instance. A phone charger is used for only a few hours per week, yet may be left plugged in all week long. If you think about it, there are many electronic appliances that are left plugged in all year long that really don't need to be plugged in at all. If you took one of each device listed below and left them all plugged in while turned "off" for the whole year, it could cost you over \$39 per year to just leave it sit there.

Here are the top 10 "phantom" energy hogs that consume the most energy:

- #1 — Set-Top Box** (Average includes DVR, digital cable, digital cable with DVR, satellite, satellite with DVR)
Average watts while off: 28.286
Average watts while on: 30.198
- #2 — Notebook Computer**
Average watts while off: 8.90
Average watts while on: 29.48
- #3 — Inkjet/Multifunction with Fax**
Average watts while off: 5.31/5.26
Average watts while on: 6.22/9.16
- #4 — DVD/VCR**
Average watts while off: 5.04
Average watts while on: 13.51
- #5 — VCR**
Average watts while off: 4.68
Average watts while on: 7.77
- #6 — Central Heating Furnace**
Average watts while off: 4.21
Average watts while on: 339.71
- #7 — Cable Modem**
Average watts while off: 3.84
Average watts while on: 6.25
- #8 — Multi Function Laser Device**
Average watts while off: 3.12
Average watts while on: 46.98
- #9 — Cordless Phone With Answering Machine**
Average watts while off: 2.92
Average watts while on: 3.53
- #10 — Desktop Computer**
Average watts while off: 2.84
Average watts while on: 73.97

Be sure to stay aware of what these "phantom" electronics that are so abundant in your home, are doing to your electric bill. If all else fails, pull the plug!

Energy-Saving Tips for Holiday Cooking

Meals are an important part of the holiday celebrations you share with family and friends, but the energy used for all the cooking, baking, and dish washing can really add to your utility costs. The cost-saving strategies that follow can help you add a little modern-day energy efficiency to those traditional holiday meals.

Cooking and Baking

Energy consumption for holiday cooking starts when you turn the oven on. These cooking and baking tips will make your holiday meals more energy efficient right from the start.

- Preheat the oven to the exact temperature required; preheating is not necessary for foods that cook for several hours.
- Limit the number of times the oven door is opened; opening the door lowers the temperature as much as 25°F.
- If you use an electric oven, you can turn the oven off 15 minutes before the cooking time is complete and food will continue cooking at the set temperature as long as the oven door is not opened.
- Glass and ceramic baking dishes retain heat better than metal. If you cook with glass or ceramic dishes, you can reduce the oven temperature by 25°F.
- The self-cleaning oven feature requires the oven to be set at a very high temperature. If you want to use this feature, do so immediately after cooking to take advantage of the residual heat.
- Conserve energy by baking several batches of cookies or more than one pie at a time.

Cooking on a range top uses less energy than cooking foods in the oven. The following suggestions will help you maximize energy savings:

- Use the lowest heat setting possible.
- For electric ranges, match the size of the pan to the size of the heating element; using a 6-inch pot on an 8-inch burner wastes 40% of the energy used.

- Keep pots and pans covered to prevent heat loss.
- Clean burners and reflectors to provide better heating and save energy.
- You can turn off the burner on your electric range a few minutes before cooking is complete—the heating elements will stay hot enough to continue cooking after the electricity is turned off.

Slow cookers, electric skillet, and toaster ovens are great for heating leftovers and use much less energy than conventional ovens and range tops. Also, microwave ovens use 50% less energy than conventional ovens. To save energy, reheat food in the microwave.

Cleaning Up After the Meal

An energy-efficient dishwasher is the most cost-effective way to clean up after a holiday meal. Newer dishwashers clean heavily soiled dishes to a shine, eliminating the need for pre-rinsing. If you do pre-rinse, you can save energy by using cold water. If your dishwasher has a booster heater, set the temperature of your hot water heater to 120°F. Follow manufacturer's recommendations on how to properly operate the water heater thermostat. To save even more energy, do the following:

- Fill the dishwasher according to manufacturer's recommendations.
- Never turn the dishwasher on until you have a full load.
- Use the air-dry feature whenever possible.

For energy-efficient food storage, keep the refrigerator and freezer well stocked. This helps maintain the set temperature and reduces energy loss when the door is open. Removing as many items as possible each time the door is opened cuts down on the number of openings as well.

Energy savings is a gift that keeps on giving. If you continue to follow these suggestions after the holiday season is over, you will reduce your energy costs all year long.

The average family of four saves \$35-\$40 a month

when they join the Hot Water Storage program

That is about a \$445 savings per year!

If your water heater is not on the Storage Program, give the Co-op a call at 1-800-494-6272.

We will explain how you can start saving too!

A \$200 rebate is available to members who have an uncontrolled electric water heater system and who switch to McLeod's money-saving Hot Water Storage Program!

When is Dual Fuel controlled and why?

Members with Dual Fuel systems will periodically have their electric heat controlled as weather conditions, prices in the wholesale energy market, and regional power supplies dictate. Electric heat on Dual Fuel can be controlled for up to 400 hours per year and up to 12 hours in one stretch without recharge, so you want to make sure your back-up heating system is automatic and able to heat your home on the coldest winter nights for extended periods.

Although control most usually will occur between 4 and 10 p.m. on a week night, it can happen in the morning and it can happen on a weekend. It does not need to be a freezing cold night for load control to occur. When prices in the energy market are extremely high or regional power suppliers have plants down, control can also occur.

For members with peak shave water heaters, the control plan will be determined daily. Each day the Co-op will post on our web site (www.mcleodcoop.com) the planned water heater control for that day. Members without internet access may call our office to get that information.

Dual Fuel control times are available daily by going to the Cooperative's web site. Click on "Is today a Load Mgmt Control Day?" on our home page to get historical control times.

Volunteers needed for nominating committee

To elect directors in District 4, 5, and 6 in 2012, we need members from those districts to serve on the Nominating Committee. Nominating Committee members participate in the election process by selecting director candidates and submitting their names to the Board for approval. They also assist with collecting and counting ballots at the annual meeting. Volunteers are needed from the following townships:

District 4 includes: Boon Lake, Preston Lake, Brookfield, Hector, Osceola, and a portion of Kingman Township, all in Renville County, and a portion of East Lake Lillian Township in Kandiyohi County.

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

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

If you reside in one of these townships and are a member in good standing, you may volunteer by Jan. 3 to serve on the Nominating Committee for your district. The Annual Meeting is planned for April 10, 2012.

				Ellsworth	Collin-wood		Victor	Wood-land	Franklin
				3					
	East Lake Lillian			Acoma	Hutch-inson	Hale	Winsted	Holly-wood	Water-town
	4					7 1			9
Kingman	Osceola	Brook-field	Boon Lake	Lynn	Hassan Valley	Rich Valley	Bergen	Camden	
Bird Island	Melville	Hector	Preston Lake	Collins	Sumter	Glencoe	Helen	Young America	
				5 2					
Norfolk	Palmyra	Martins-burg	Grafton	Round Grove	Penn	New Auburn	Green Isle		
	8					6			
	Bandon	Wellington	Molke	Bismarck	Transit	Dryden	Arlington		

Sign up now to round up your electric bill for Operation Round Up®



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

Members may sign up any month of the year to round up their electric bill to the nearest dollar for Operation Round Up.

Not only is this an easy and tax-deductible way to support local projects, but it is very worthwhile and all the money is kept in our local communities. The maximum donation possible per month is 99 cents. Most donors average \$6 per year.

As a "thank you" for members participating in Operation Round Up, two participants names were drawn and awarded \$25 electric bill credits at last year's annual meeting. We hope to do the same thing this year. So, sign up for Operation Round Up before the end of the year and your name will be included in the drawing for electric bill credits at the 2012 annual meeting. Just sign up using this form.

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: _____

MCPA Director Candidate Application

The undersigned, a member of McLeod Cooperative Power Association, hereby applies as a nominee for director of McLeod Cooperative Power Association from District _____ and requests that my name be considered by the Nominating Committee to be placed on the ballot for the next election for director from said district to be held at the next Annual Meeting, April 10, 2012.

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

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

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

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

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Power Line Worker Scholarships Offered



Students accepted into one of Minnesota's three power line technology programs for the 2012-13 school term may apply for a \$500 scholarship. The Cooperative will award up to four \$500 scholarships for local students.

If you are graduating from a high school in McLeod, Renville, Sibley or Carver County or are a resident of one of those four

counties and have been accepted into the line worker program at Minnesota West in Jackson, Minnesota State in Wadena or Rosemount Technical College in Rosemount, you are eligible to apply.

Applications and informative career brochures are available by calling the Cooperative at 800-494-6272. Applications must be completed and returned by April 16, 2012.