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Official publication of



www.mcleodcoop.com

## Members gathered for 78th Annual Meeting



350 persons gathered at the Hutchinson Event Center for McLeod Co-op Power's annual business meeting Tuesday

The members of McLeod Cooperative Power Association gathered for the 78th annual meeting of the Cooperative on Tuesday, April 9, 2013 at the Hutchinson Event Center. About 350 members and guests attended the meeting and were served a pork sandwich dinner.

Three directors were elected for a three-year term each: Randy Hlavka of Silver Lake, Keith Peterson of Hector, and Gerald Roepke of New Germany were elected to serve Districts, 7, 8, and 9, respectively. Hlavka is a new director elected to fill the seat of Bill Polchow, who did not seek re-election. Peterson and Roepke were incumbent candidates re-elected to another term.

Reports were given by Financial Service Manager Jan



Directors elected L to r: Randy Hlavka, Gerald Roepke, and Keith Peterson.

Sanderson, Board President Gerald Roepke, and General Manager Kris Ingenthron. Gary Connett of Great River Energy was guest speaker. Curt Burns announced the Operation Round Up award winners.

Attendance prizes were also awarded. The grand prize was a \$300 electric bill credit. It was won by Alvin Schiroo of Glencoe.

The new board of directors elected their officers for the coming year. Keith Peterson was selected as board president, Roger Karstens as vice-president, Dale Peters as secretary-treasurer, and Gerald Roepke as assistant secretary-treasurer. Oria Brinkmeier will be the cooperative's representative to Great River Energy.



Bob Thomes of MCPA presents Alvin Schiroo of Glencoe with his \$300 electric bill credit.

## We need your help to keep electricity costs from skyrocketing unnecessarily

The Omnibus Energy Bill currently going through the Minnesota Legislature includes taxes/mandates to subsidize solar installations, changes to the net metering law and costly changes to the 2007 renewable energy mandate. These topics are detailed on Page 2 of this newsletter in Kris Ingenthron's Manager's Message.

Please contact the governor and your legislators regarding the Omnibus Energy Bill.

### Tell them that you:

- Oppose costly increases to the renewable energy standard
- Oppose a costly solar mandate and unnecessary incentives that pick a renewable technology winner at the expense of cooperative ratepayers
- Expanding net metering from 40 kW to 1000 kW will benefit a few who can afford a turbine or solar array at the expense of their neighbors and the regular consumer who does not own one. Support net metering reform that adopts the cooperative principle of cost neutrality, and size to load.

### MN Governor

Gov. Mark Dayton  
1-800-657-3717  
go to  
<http://mn.gov/governor/contact-us/form/> to enter your message

### MN House of Rep.

**Renville County:**  
Andrew Falk  
1-888-682-1388  
[rep.andrew.falk@house.mn](mailto:rep.andrew.falk@house.mn)

### Carver County:

Ernie Leidiger of Mayer  
1-651-296-4282  
[rep.ernie.leidiger@house.mn](mailto:rep.ernie.leidiger@house.mn)

### McLeod/Sibley County:

Glenn Gruenhagen  
1-800-341-0510  
[rep.glenn.gruenhagen@house.mn](mailto:rep.glenn.gruenhagen@house.mn)

### MN Senate

**Renville County:**  
Lyle Koenen  
1-651-296-5094  
[sen.lyle.koenen@senate.mn](mailto:sen.lyle.koenen@senate.mn)

### Carver County:

Julianne Ortman  
1-651-296-4837  
[sen.julianne.ortman@senate.mn](mailto:sen.julianne.ortman@senate.mn)

### McLeod/Sibley County:

Scott Newman  
1-651-296-4131  
[sen.scott.newman@senate.mn](mailto:sen.scott.newman@senate.mn)

*Thank you for taking the time to contact our legislators and the governor about this proposed legislation.*

## Allocation notices on April bill statement

The amount of capital credits allocated to each member for 2012 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 2012 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.

## Life support members

If the health of someone living in your home is directly dependent on electricity, your service location needs to be on our Medically Necessary Equipment list. This could include members on life support, oxygen or other devices that require power. Call 1-800-494-6272 during business hours to give us details and be put on this list.

Members on this list are provided advance notice of planned power outages. We do our best to contact you during large unplanned outages if it appears that it will take some time for power restoration so you can make alternate arrangements and get to a place with power, if necessary. Since members on this list may not necessarily have their power restored first, we encourage you to have back-up plans to prepare for outages.

If you previously had a family member on the Medically Necessary Equipment list and they no longer live in your home or no longer need this equipment, please call to make sure we remove your location from our list.

# Manager's Message —

by Kris Ingenthron, General Manager  
McLeod Cooperative Power Association



## Energy elitism

The Minnesota Legislature in 2007 imposed a mandate requiring 25% of all energy produced in the state to be renewable. In the past year alone, that mandate has cost electric cooperatives across the state over \$70 million. That's an average of about \$100 for the typical co-op member. Put another way, you paid \$100 for wind that blows when it's not needed and is sold into the market at a considerable loss. Is this how you'd like to spend that \$100?

In 2013, some members of the Legislature and certainly Governor Dayton are enamored with solar. So much so, that a proposal to require a two percent solar mandate is moving its way through the process. A 2% mandate would cost the citizens of the state over \$100 million just for the cost of the solar panels and installation alone. It also doesn't factor in the additional cost of incentives, rebates or higher prices for electricity.

The ultimate goal of most of the solar legislation being considered is to subsidize the installation of solar panels on residential rooftops. The sad truth is that much — if not most — of the incentives would go to subsidize the construction of solar on the homes of our state's most affluent citizens. At a time when the Governor is promoting a more progressive income tax, his energy policy penalizes most rural residents who cannot afford the estimated \$50,000 to fit their home with solar. This is regressive energy economics falling on those struggling to pay their electric bill.

Keep in mind Minnesota is awash in energy. There are far too many kilowatt hours chasing too few electric outlets. Yet, the promotion of solar and wind by members of the Minnesota Legislature and the Governor will mean that electric cooperatives will have even more excess generation that they will pump into the market at a loss. That in turn will lead to higher energy rates.

If expensive solar mandates are added to the already zealous renewable energy standard by the Minnesota Legislature, consumers will pay, and pay dearly, for what legislators think is in your best energy interest.

There is, however, one thing you should know. Your legislators and Governor do listen to you. If you agree with this, send it to your legislators and Governor Dayton or call their office. Tell them you want renewable energy only when it makes financial sense and can exist without subsidies and taxes from your pocket.

Cooperatively yours,

## 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 educate youngsters 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 third year Dairy Queen has partnered with Co-op stateside to promote electrical safety and efficiency.



### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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#### Brownton

#### District 3

Roger Karstens, Vice President

#### Hutchinson

#### District 4

Doug Kirtz, **Hector**

#### District 5

Allan Duesterhoeft, **Hutchinson**

#### District 6

Lester Ranzau

#### Glencoe

#### District 7

Randy Hlavka

#### Silver Lake

#### District 8

Keith Peterson, President

#### Hector

#### District 9

Gerald Roepke, Asst. Secretary-Treasurer

#### New Germany

### MCLEOD COOPERATIVE POWER NEWS

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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 shown.

#### Office Hours:

Monday - Friday  
7:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

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**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

# Trees are power line hazards during storm season



April 15 through 19 is Severe Weather Awareness Week and a reminder of how important it is that trees be kept away from power lines. Trees can be a hazard year-round, but they are particularly guilty of causing problems with the power line system this time of year.

Trees that come in contact with a power line can start on fire and cause short circuits, outages and unsafe conditions for those nearby. In fact, a tree does not need to actually touch a power line to cause a hazard. If it is near enough, an arc of electricity can form a short circuit through air from the power line wire to the tree. This "arc flash" can result in dangerous situations and outages.

That's why utilities like Great River Energy and McLeod Cooperative Power work hard to keep the area around power lines, or the right of way, clear of trees or vegetation that could potentially interfere with power lines. Great River Energy is our wholesale power supplier.

Byron Johnson, supervisor of vegetation management for Great River Energy, said in the case of high voltage power lines, stricter regulatory standards have led transmission utilities across North America to begin taking a more proactive approach to keeping rights of way clear.

"We have always been committed to public safety and reliability, but now significant fines are being assessed for noncompliance, and transmission utilities are being even more proactive than before. Trees that may have been pruned in the

past are now more often being removed," he said. Johnson said that reduces costs as well, as it costs utilities money each time they must prune a tree.

Johnson said vegetation management makes up approximately 40 percent of Great River Energy's transmission maintenance budget. The process of removing just one tree can cost \$200 to \$400, depending on the size of the tree and how close it is to a home or other building. Those costs are ultimately paid for by members.

There are many options available to property owners who are interested in landscaping the area near a power line, but it is important to choose wisely to avoid problems in the future. Native plants and grasses are one option to consider. If you prefer something more traditional, the rule of thumb for shrubs and ornamental trees is to choose species that will grow no more than 15 to 18 feet high at maturity. Choosing the proper location is equally as important.

Information about what to plant and where is available in *The Right Tree* guide at [www.greatriverenergy.com/treesandvegetation](http://www.greatriverenergy.com/treesandvegetation) for more information and guidance. And as always, do NOT plant anything in the right of way without first contacting your utility.



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

### Announcing the 2013 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 \_\_\_\_\_

## March Outage Summary

**During March there were 15 outages reported on the Cooperative's system.**

- The largest outage was on Sunday, March 24 beginning at 9:53 a.m. It started out when an underground tap failed in the Winthrop Substation. It blew the conductor out of the pipe and into the substation bus work. The initial outage affected 64 members on that feeder. They were out initially for an hour and twelve minutes. However, crews had to shut down the entire substation to safely get the wires untangled from the bus work. Taking the sub out of service turned the lights out for 561 members for ten minutes, and then it took an additional twenty-five minutes to make repairs to get those 64 members on the damaged feeder back on.

Most outages affect only one or two members. They are frequently caused by small animals, trees in the line, equipment failure, or motor vehicle/machinery accidents. Larger outages affecting hundreds of members at a time are usually caused by transmission outages, storms, equipment failure to substation equipment, or accidents.

Restoration time on weekend and evening outages, when line crews are called out from home, usually take a little longer to get back on than outages when crews are already out working on the project.

# Be prepared in case of spring flooding

by Lidia Dilley, Star-Energy Services

As of late March, the National Weather Service is warning residents in parts of Minnesota to get ready for some major flooding as all the snow begins to melt this spring. The risk for flooding has jumped 15 percent in April, bringing the risk to greater than 95 percent. Even if you don't live in an area that regularly experiences flooding, this may be the year when you find water seeping into your lower level or basement.

Why? We have had above average snowpack that now sits on top of frozen soil. If you or a friend, experience this unfortunate disaster, keep the following questions and answers in mind.

## Question 1 -

***My home wasn't flooded, but some electrical appliances have gotten wet. Can I still use them?***

Do not use electrical appliances that have been wet until they have been examined by a qualified service repair dealer. Water can damage the motors in electrical appliances; e.g., furnaces, freezers, refrigerators, washing machines, and dryers. Electrical equipment exposed to



water can be extremely dangerous if reenergized without proper reconditioning or replacement.

To learn more about handling water damaged electrical equipment, the National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA®) has produced a brochure, "Guidelines for Handling Water Damaged Electrical Equipment," for use by installers, inspectors, and users of electrical products. The NEMA brochure may be downloaded free of charge at: <http://www.nema.org>.

## Question 2 -

***My basement has flooded and there is standing water. Is it safe to go down there?***

Use extreme care when stepping into flooded areas. Submerged outlets or electrical cords can energize water, posing a lethal trap.

## Question 3 -

***Does a flood affect my home's electrical system or just the appliances?***

Water and silt inside electrical items such as circuit breakers, fuses, ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs), receptacles, plugs, and switches can cause them to malfunction. Discard if they have been submerged. Have a licensed, qualified professional replace them.

## Question 4 -

***Does it make a difference what type of water caused the damage...storm water or leaking pipes?***

Damage to electrical equipment can result from any type of water. Equipment also can be damaged during exposure to flood waters contaminated with chemicals, sewage, oil and other debris. No matter what caused the flood, the same rules apply—when it's wet, it's wet.

## Question 5 -

***Can flooded areas outside be dangerous too?***

Yes, downed power lines or submerged outlets from adjacent homes could energize the water. Use extreme caution when entering any flooded area.

Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI), <http://esfi.org>

## Save money with these tips during your Spring cleaning

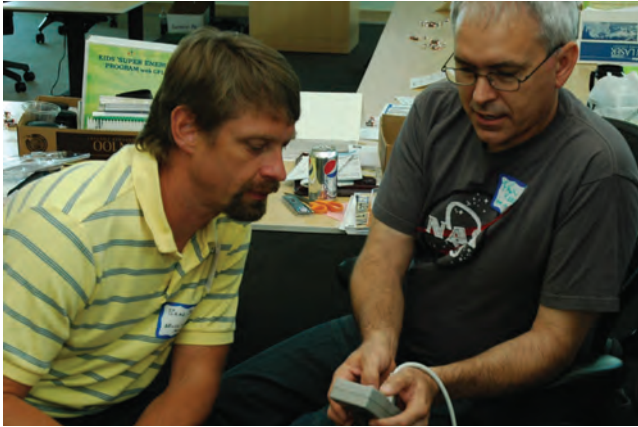


Did you know that the annual ritual of Spring cleaning can actually help you to save energy? The tips that follow will help to ensure that your home appliances and your heating and cooling system are running efficiently and reducing your family's exposure to harmful chemicals:

- When vacuuming and dusting, remember to clean under and behind the refrigerator. Dust build up will cause the refrigerator to run less efficiently.
- While cleaning windows look for loose panes, cracks, or poor caulking that may be leaking air. During warm weather, replace storm windows with screens to provide natural cooling. You may also want to consider replacing older windows with new, more energy-efficient models.
- Dust accumulation on light bulbs blocks a considerable amount of light. Wipe off light bulbs to achieve maximum illumination. When replacing bulbs, switch to energy-efficient compact fluorescent lighting (CFLs).

- Leaky ducts often result in rapid dust accumulation around heating and cooling vents, causing your air-conditioning system to run less efficiently. Have your system checked and cleaned by a qualified professional.
- Dirt or dust buildup on baseboard heaters restricts air flow and reduces system efficiency. Open or remove the surrounding covers and vacuum or brush the fins and straighten any that are bent. This will help to ensure efficient airflow and optimize heater performance.
- Make sure ceiling fans are dust free and working properly. Reverse fans downward to circulate air and make your home feel cooler.
- During Spring cleaning, you may have more laundry and dish washing than usual. Always make sure these appliances are at full capacity before using them.

# Earn graduate credits FREE at this Teacher Energy Education Seminar



The Lignite Energy Council of Bismarck, North Dakota is sponsoring a “FREE” teacher seminar titled 2013 Lignite Teacher Education Seminar: Energy, Economics and Environment at Bismarck State College, Bismarck, North Dakota, on June 17-20, 2013. The seminar is being held in cooperation with Bismarck State College, the Center for Economic Education at the University of North Dakota, North Dakota State University and Minot State University. Each participating teacher can earn two semester graduate credits (economics – UND, education – NDSU or science - MSU) by successfully completing the seminar requirements. Credits are paid for by the Lignite Energy Council.

This seminar is designed to provide teachers with a broader understanding of the lignite coal industry and the important role it plays in providing electricity to consumers, farmers and businesses in our region. The seminar includes discussions on how lignite coal is mined and converted into energy, and the economic impact of the industry on the region. It also includes a tour of a lignite mine, a lignite-fired power plant, and the Great Plains Synfuels Plant (which converts coal into synthetic natural gas and other valuable by-products).

Teachers from all grade levels will be accepted in the program.

Our wholesale electric provider, Great River Energy, is helping sponsor the seminar and will pay your registration fee and transportation costs. Teachers selected to attend the seminar will be required to send in a \$60 deposit to hold their place in the seminar which will be returned to them when they check in the first day of the seminar on June 17, 2013.

For more information or an application form, consult your school’s principal or contact Becky Sorenson at Meeker Cooperative (320-593-4113) or Katie Ide at McLeod Co-op Power (1-800-494-6272).

## INDUSTRY News

### Is the sky the limit for wind power?

Wind power is growing faster than ever — almost half of the new sources of electricity added to the U.S. power grid last year were wind farms. But is the sky the limit? Several scientists now say it’s actually possible to have so many turbines that they start to lose power. They steal each other’s wind. Sailboat captains experience a similar phenomenon; they call it “dirty air.” If you’re sailing directly downwind of another sailboat, you’ll slow down. That’s because the lead boat creates a turbulent vortex of air behind it as the wind spills off its sails. As sailors know, “dirty air” means less power.

The blades on wind turbines make dirty air too, so engineers space the machines far apart. But wind developers want to bring the total number of turbines in the U.S. to more than 100,000, up from about 45,000 today. Would that spread the turbulent air far and wide? Harvard physicist David Keith says that’s possible. “[With] very large wind farms,” he says, “we can now see long footprints that extend, in some cases, tens of kilometers downstream, where you have slower-moving wind.”

Keith is one of several scientists who have designed computer simulations to see what might happen at huge wind farms. “If we’re going to scale wind power up to supply a significant fraction of the global energy demand — say 10 percent of global energy demand as we get towards midcentury — then these effects begin to matter,” he says. “Exactly how much they matter we still don’t know.” The answer has become a kind of puzzle for atmospheric scientists. Just what, they ask, is the “saturation point” for wind power? That is, when is the wind so dirty that there’s no point in building one more turbine?

~Minnesota Public Radio

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## You may receive a survey

Great River Energy and McLeod Co-op Power are conducting a survey that will help us better serve your future needs. Through a random selection process, you may be asked to help. If you are selected, you will receive the survey in early June by mail. We ask that you take time to complete the survey, as the information is valuable to us.

### More on the survey:

This survey is conducted approximately every four years to track appliance usage patterns as well as the saturation of appliances within our service territory. This information is used primarily to help determine our long-range load forecast needs, but is also used to better understand what types and ages of appliances exist within our service territory. We appreciate your willingness to take this survey and thank you in advance for your participation.

## Pole testing scheduled in Buffalo Lake area in May

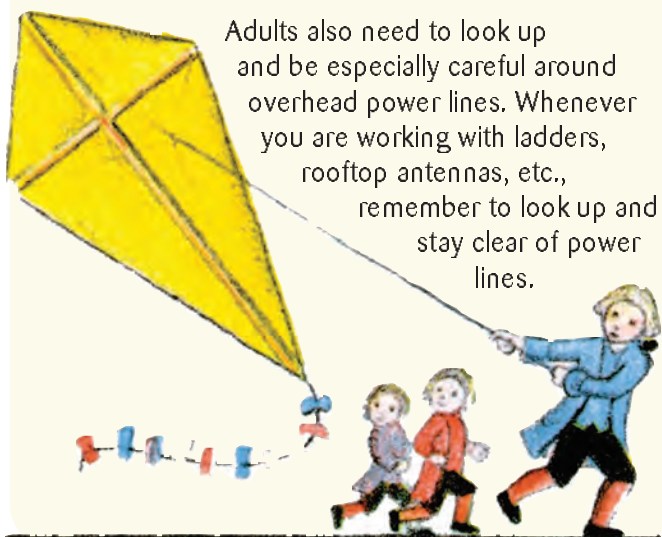
If you live in the rural area surrounding Buffalo Lake and Stewart (those served by the Preston Lake Substation) you may see some people drilling near our poles during May. The Co-op has contracted with Mi-Tech, a pole testing company based in Green Bay, WI, to check the condition of our poles in that area.

We always encourage our members to call us anytime you have questions or concerns regarding people working on or near our facilities. You are the Co-op's eyes and ears out in the field and we greatly appreciate it when you report anything unusual to us.

## 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.



## Low or no interest on qualifying energy-efficiency upgrades available

*Have you been planning energy-efficient upgrades in your home, but need help with financing?*

*McLeod Co-op Power may be able to help!*

Our wholesale provider, Great River Energy, has partnered with the Center for Energy and Environment (CEE) to offer electric cooperative members low or zero percent interest loans for qualifying energy-efficient equipment upgrades. The goal of the program is to provide a simple, affordable financing opportunity for homeowners to increase the energy efficiency of their home.

### What Equipment Qualifies?

The program features zero percent and 2.99 percent interest loans for up to \$7,500 and \$25,000, respectively, for the following energy-efficient equipment projects\*:

- Ground source heat pumps that meet or exceed ENERGY STAR® Tier 1 energy efficiency requirements.
- ENERGY STAR® qualified air-source heat pumps (including mini-split ductless).
- Electric thermal storage (ETS) space heating systems capable of providing up to 100 percent of the home's heating requirements by using stored heat produced from electricity during a nightly, off-peak period.
- ENERGY STAR® qualified heat pump water heaters.
- ETS water heating systems with an energy factor (EF) of 0.90 or greater and a storage capacity of at least 80 gallons.
- System restrictions and additional qualifications apply. Please contact your Co-op member services department for the full details on the qualified improvements listed above.

### Member Eligibility

- Dwelling must be a residential, one-unit, owner-occupied property (system restrictions and additional qualifications may apply).
- Member must be in good financial standing with McLeod Co-op Power.
- Loans must be secured via a mortgage against the property not to exceed \$25,000 or up to 100 percent of the property value.
- No family income limits apply.

### Simple Loan Process!

- Loan Documents:
  - Visit [www.mnbrighterideas.com/](http://www.mnbrighterideas.com/) or
  - Call a dedicated toll-free number (855)-335-5835 and CEE will mail you an application.
- Return them by mail, fax or email to the address provided in the loan application package.
- Following approval of the loan, a check is mailed to the member, who then has 6 months after the loan closing to complete the installation.
- All loans are subject to random inspection to insure the work was completed.

Important Notes: CEE contracts with Community Reinvestment Fund (CRF) to service their loans. The loan is by CRF and is a contract between CRF and the co-op member. Members will receive statements directly from CRF. McLeod Co-op Power is not, in any way, responsible for any loan being denied, the execution of the loan, or the payments that are due to CRF.

The current loan terms and conditions stated, including interest rates, do not constitute a commitment to lend or an offer to enter into an agreement, and such an offer may only be made pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 47.206(3) and (4). For more information, please visit [www.mnbrighterideas.com](http://www.mnbrighterideas.com) or call (855)-335-5835.

### Loan Parameters

Equipment*	Total Loan Available	Term of Loan	Interest Rate
Ground Source Heat Pump	Up to \$25,000	Up to 120 Months (10 Years)	2.99 %
Air Source Heat Pump	Up to \$7,500	Up to 60 Months (5 years)	0.00%
ETS Water Heater	Up to \$7,500	Up to 60 Months (5 years)	0.00%
ETS Space Heater	Up to \$7,500	Up to 60 Months (5 years)	0.00%
Heat Pump Water Heater	Up to \$7,500	Up to 60 Months (5 years)	0.00%

# Operation Round Up donation winners announced for 2013



The Operation Round Up Board of directors is made up of five volunteers from around the Cooperative's service area. Board members (standing l to r) Curt Burns of Stewart, Mike Ruskamp of Hector, and Virgil Stender of Norwood-Young America. Seated: Cheryl Beilke of Hutchinson, and Elizabeth Schwarze of Lester Prairie.

This year 16 completed applications were received for donations. The eight projects receiving funding were:

- \$500 Senior Nutrition Program of Lutheran Social Services** — to replace triple insulated canvas bags for delivering meals to homebound seniors in McLeod County.
- \$500 Heartland Community Action Agency of Hutchinson** — to assist low-income families with basic needs like diapers, personal hygiene supplies, and bus tokens.
- \$500 Common Cup Ministry** — to provide weekend backpack meals to Hutchinson and Glencoe 2nd and 3rd grade students who qualify for free or reduced price meals.
- \$500 Tim Orth Memorial Foundation** — financial assistance for 18 children who are fighting to overcome challenges caused by accident or illness from our region of Minnesota.
- \$500 American Red Cross** — provide disaster relief, disaster preparedness training, and volunteer training in McLeod, Renville, and Sibley Counties.
- \$500 Buffalo Creek BMX of Glencoe** — to make improvements to race track, purchase bicycles and safety equipment for youth using BMX course.
- \$400 Green Isle Lions** — to purchase new jackets at clearance prices and to allow for the purchase of hard-to-get sizes for Sibley County coat drive/distribution.
- \$300 Santa's Helpers Committee** — to purchase toys, hats, and mittens for holiday distribution in Sibley County.

Any non-profit 501(c)3 charity is invited to apply for funds before March 1, 2014 if they have a special fund raising project or community project.

## Focus on Operation Round Up recipient:

## Tim Orth Foundation



Zach & Ella, two past Orth Foundation recipients, along with Governor Mark Dayton, and a cast of other characters, participated in the opening ceremony at one of the 2012 jamboree events.



In 1996, Tim Orth, a BOLD High School student and athlete was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor. Tim lived each day of his life to the fullest - enjoying sports, music, time with his friends and the love of his family. Tim's battle with his disease was lost on February 14, 1997. His legacy,

his fight, the determination and the inspiration he brought to us each day of his journey continues to be ongoing and a truly amazing gift. Tim has given us the motivation to become better people; to create, to the best of our abilities, an opportunity to bring hope into the lives of other children who are fighting to overcome difficult challenges brought on by illness or accident. Tim's spirit is not measured by the days he spent here on earth, but by the depth of the imprint his journey has left in the lives of others.

In Tim's memory, The Tim Orth Memorial Foundation continues to provide financial assistance and emotional support to numerous families living with serious illness and injuries. Some of these include complications due to cancer, brain injury, automobile accidents, premature birth and numerous other diagnoses we cannot even pronounce.

This year the Tim Orth Foundation received a \$500 donation from the Operation Round Up Trust at the Cooperative. Through its fundraising jamboree events at Bird Island, Fairfax, and Glencoe this year, they will raise funds to support 18 children and their families that are dealing with a child's illness or injury. Many children from our area have been recipients of financial assistance from the Orth Foundation over the last 16 years. This year, of the 18 recipients, four are from McLeod County, three from Renville County, one from Carver County, four from Kandiyohi County and one from Meeker County.

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: \_\_\_\_\_



## Washington D.C. Youth Tour winner selected

Winner of the 2013 Washington D.C. Youth Tour trip is Kelsey Kramer of Hector. Her parents are members Tim and Pam Kramer of rural Hector. She is a senior at Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City High School. She will represent McLeod Cooperative at the youth conference in June.

## When is the last time you cleaned your dryer vent?

**I**f you can't remember when, then it has been too long. When a dryer vent starts clogging with lint, you may find it takes one, two or three hours to finish drying a load of clothes. After the dryer vent is disassembled and cleaned of lint buildup, the same load of clothes may be dry in less than 45 minutes. This can mean big energy savings on each load. A clogged dryer vent is also a safety/fire hazard. So please take the time to check your dryer vent pipe today.

## MCPA ended relationship with DIRECTV on March 15

**D**uring March the Cooperative ended its twenty year relationship with DIRECTV. McLeod Cooperative Power is no longer an authorized DIRECTV retailer and is no longer selling satellite systems, associated equipment, or doing service installations for DIRECTV.

It has been a few years since DIRECTV purchased the franchise from the Cooperative. Last summer DIRECTV took over all billing and payment functions for our customers. The final tie the Cooperative had with DIRECTV was selling systems as a dealer and servicing systems for their customers. The MCPA Board of Directors chose to end the agreement with DIRECTV on March 15.

The Cooperative does still provide other technical services such as WildBlue internet, exede high speed internet, and emergency medical pendants.



## Training for HVAC and electrical contractors

MCPA Energy Management Specialist Shannon Jerabek goes over some information with the contractors attending training.

McLeod Cooperative Power hosted a training session for about 30 local HVAC contractors and electricians on March 1. Contractors were educated on the products sold by the Cooperative, updated on wiring diagrams, and

technical installation procedures. Factory reps from Steffes Corporation and Electro Industries also presented information on proper installation and servicing of their products.

## Electricity: An affordable service that makes every day easier

**E**lectricity is a dependable and affordable energy source for homes, farms and businesses across Minnesota, and it is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Electricity makes it possible to take advantage of life's conveniences — and its flexibility is unmatched.

Every year, electricity is a more valuable and important part of our lives and Great River Energy learns new ways to produce it more efficiently and with a smaller environmental impact. Through it all, electricity has remained an outstanding value. Here's a quick example. Imagine that you switched on a 40-watt light bulb and left it on until you used a dollar's worth of electricity. How long do you suspect it would take to consume four quarters worth of power? The answer: more than 8 days.

Electricity keeps your water hot, your signal strong and your lights on. On average, American homes have more than 40 light bulbs and nearly three televisions. Not to mention that home is where the charger is — while consumers sleep, laptops, phones and tablets prepare for tomorrow. Right now electricity is powering your devices, heating or cooling your home, and entertaining your children.

Great River Energy and its member cooperatives have assembled an assortment of



materials to educate consumers about the value they receive from their electric cooperative.

Learn about the value of electricity at [mnbrighterideas.com/valueofelectricity](http://mnbrighterideas.com/valueofelectricity).

### Just look at what you can do with \$1 worth of electricity:

- Run your ceiling fan for a month
- Charge your phone for 18 months
- Watch TV for 4 months
- Make toast for 2 months
- Blow dry your hair for 90 days
- Wash your dishes for a week
- Use your microwave for 2 weeks