

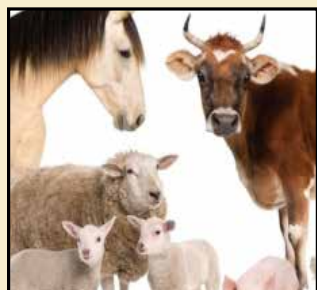
McLeod Cooperative Power NEWS

September 2014

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Official publication of



www.mcleodcoop.com

Have something to sell?

Consider placing a classified ad in the MCPA newsletter. Ads are free to members. This is a benefit of membership.

You can sell a car, camper, farm machinery or stuff you are cleaning out of your attic. Check out the details inside this newsletter. Look for the ad coupon. Certain restrictions apply so please read the details.

Community Solar Opportunity

McLeod Cooperative Power is finalizing details to make solar energy available to our members via a Community Solar Project. Plans are to construct a solar array in the spring of 2015 adjacent to the Co-op's pole yard property southwest of Glencoe. The array will utilize tenKsolar panels, which are manufactured in Minnesota.

Our power supplier, Great River Energy, will be installing 20 kW of their own generation at the site and they will assist MCPA with the permitting, design, and construction of our Community Solar Project at the same location. Group purchasing and shared cost for fencing and construction will allow MCPA to offer our members solar at a much lower cost per installed Watt than we could have attained on our own.

Building a solar array will allow MCPA members to purchase the kWh output of one or more panels and reduce their monthly electric bill by their share of

the kWh produced by the community solar array, without shifting the cost for renewable energy to the other members who do not participate. Building and maintaining a solar array is also a good

opportunity for McLeod Cooperative Power to learn more about generating power from solar, so we can be an informed resource for our members.

The Solar Community option will allow participants to receive a share of the power generated but the Cooperative will take

care of all construction, insurance, repairs, and maintenance for the life of the project (20 or more years). It is a hassle-free option for members who desire to invest in solar.

Within a month or two, we should have details available on pricing, annual solar panel output, return on investment, etc., and will then give our members the opportunity to sign up! Watch next month's newsletter for more details.



SOLAR WISE

May I install solar at my own home?

Members are certainly able to purchase their own solar array and have it installed at their home or business. However, sometimes this is more difficult if you are a renter, if you have trees or buildings that block some of the sun's rays, or a poor southern exposure. Installing at your own property requires researching and purchasing quality panels from a reputable installer and meeting all local planning and zoning codes.

If you plan to interconnect to the grid and sell excess power back to the Co-op, then the State of Minnesota requires an application to the interconnecting utility, an application fee for projects 20 kW or larger, and approval of your project. It also must comply with all the state contract requirements, paying for all electrical and metering upgrades required for net metering, hiring a Minnesota licensed electrical contractor to wire the system and have it inspected to make sure it meets code, and carrying a \$300,000 liability insurance policy. Maintenance and replacement of any panels would be the responsibility of the home owner.

It is a good idea to contact the Cooperative before you purchase any solar generation, especially if you plan to sell back any excess energy produced. Our staff can provide you with information on the Minnesota interconnection rules and help you through the process.

New food cooperative forming



A group of area residents (with input and information from the City of Glencoe and the Glencoe Area Chamber of Commerce) have been trying to organize a food cooperative in Glencoe. They have a steering committee that is working on incorporation of the cooperative and getting the word out to possible future members.

More than 150 people attended a 90-minute informational meeting on August 19 at the Glencoe City Center. As of that August meeting, more than 700 individuals had signed up as being interested in having a food Co-op in Glencoe. Soon the group will start raising funds to do a market feasibility study to make sure the community would support a food co-op. Then a business

plan would be formulated, memberships solicited, loans secured and funding raised, a site selected and the business operating.

The benefits of a local food cooperative are:

- Healthful and organic foods, as well as locally grown produce and products
- Specialty items not found at other stores in the area
- Profits stay in the community
- Job creation in the community
- Co-ops stimulate the economy
- Support for local producers
- Opportunity for local people to share in ownership of a retail business
- Social — part of the community

There are currently 350-400 food cooperatives in the US and that number is steadily growing. There are over 40 food cooperatives in the Twin Cities and outstate Minnesota. Local residents in attendance at

the informational meeting who shop at food cooperatives in the Twin Cities, St. Peter, or Litchfield were very supportive of a food cooperative starting in McLeod County.

Generally, people become a co-op member with a one-time share purchase. There is no annual fee. Often members get special discounts. Capital credits are paid out to members based on their volume of purchases once the co-op is making money. Although anyone can shop at a food co-op, there are sometimes financial benefits for members. The cost of membership has not been determined yet for the Glencoe Food Cooperative, as they are still in the early stages of finding members.

To find out more about the Glencoe Food Co-op, go to www.glencoefoodcoop.com or www.facebook.com/glencoefoodcoop. To sign up go to www.tinyurl.com/GlencoeCoop or access that page from the group's web site.

July Outage Summary

During the month of July the Cooperative had a total of 34 outages, affecting 382 consumers. Eight outages were caused by squirrels and seven outages by trees branches hanging over or getting into lines. Five were caused by lightning.

The largest outage for July was Monday, July 14, about 9:00 p.m. Northeast of Hutchinson when 178 members were without power for four hours and 23 minutes due to a tree in the line. The second largest outage was Monday, July 7, about 5:45 p.m. when lightning caused

an outage for 125 members south of Glencoe. Consumers were out for one hour and 13 minutes.

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.

Spiritwood Station online; First new coal-fired generating plant in N.D. in more than 30 years

The fires have been lit, and the turbines are spinning on the first new coal-fired electrical generating plant to go online in North Dakota in more than 30 years, according to Bill Wahlman, leader of plant operations and maintenance at the Great River Energy's Spiritwood Station. Spiritwood Station is a 99-megawatt coal-fired generating plant that will also produce industrial steam for the nearby Cargill Malt plant and Dakota Spirit AgEnergy, an ethanol plant which is under construction across the road from the generating plant.

"The startup is going well," Wahlman said. "The normal startup is usually a little bit of chaos. This has gone smoothly." Wahlman said the boiler was first fired using natural gas. On Aug. 18, Spiritwood Station took its first delivery of coal and switched to burning coal a few days later. Even during the startup phase, Spiritwood Station is producing electricity. "We're generating 34 megawatts of electricity now," he said. "Things have gone exceptionally well." That electricity is going on the grid and is part of the national electrical system for sale to users. When fully functional, the plant will produce 99 megawatts of electricity for commercial and residential use and about 8 megawatts of electricity for its own use powering pumps and conveyors and steam for industrial use.

Jim McKay, fuel and logistics manager for Great River Energy, said the plant burns coal that has been processed through a drying and refining process they refer to as DryFining at Great River Energy's Coal Creek Station. This reduces the moisture content of the coal and improves the amount of energy produced when the coal is burned. Coal

processed by DryFining is shipped in enclosed rail cars, unloaded within a building and moved within Spiritwood Station on an enclosed conveyor belt. "The coal is always enclosed to keep it dry and clean," McKay said. When fully operational, Spiritwood Station will burn 72 tons of coal per hour. Each rail car delivers 100 tons of coal to the plant.

Wahlman said the emissions systems are working well. "The emissions are pretty close to specifications," he said. "All those systems are running smoothly." The plant is designed to reduce emissions of pollutants into the air. This includes particle matter such as soot and harmful chemicals. "It's well within the range of emission standards," Wahlman said. "It won't be affected by changes to emission standards."

While the startup has gone well, a number of systems still require what Wahlman referred to as "fine tuning," before the plant could begin commercial operations sometime before Nov. 1. That includes getting online control systems fully functional rather than using manual controls utilized during the startup process. Wahlman said the plant will increase production to between 50 megawatts and 55 megawatts through the end of next week and then shut down for the long Labor Day weekend. "We'll come back after Labor Day and fine tune all the systems before commercialization," he said.

Plans call for Spiritwood Station to begin delivering steam heat to Cargill Malt in November and to Dakota Spirit AgEnergy when construction of the ethanol plant is complete in the spring.

The Safety Corner

As you prepare your home this fall for the upcoming winter season here are a few tips to help you stay safe around electricity.

- Keep all ladders, trimmers and other tools in the SAFE ZONE, at least 10 feet from any power lines. Put your ladder up only where you have to work. Always make sure that, if the ladder fell, it would not contact any power lines or other electrical equipment. This rule also applies to television and radio antennas. They should be far enough away so that if they were blown over, they would not fall into overhead lines.
- Unplug and safely store battery chargers that won't be in use again until spring.
- Safely store warm weather tools like lawn mowers and trimmers drained of fuel, and check cold weather tools and their power cords for unusual wear and tear. Repair or replace worn tools or parts right away.
- Keep dry leaves swept away from outdoor lighting, outlets and power cords.
- Use a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) in series with your extension cord or be sure the outlet you connect to is protected by a GFCI.
- Teach your kids never to fly kites near power lines or around electrical substations.
- Teach your kids not to climb or play in trees if there are power lines nearby or lines touching or growing through the branches. Kids should also know that pad-mounted transformers (those green cabinets that may be in your yard or around your neighborhood) are not safe places to play.

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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 \$4.80 per year for members and \$8 per year for non-members by McLeod Cooperative Power Association
1231 Ford Ave. North, Glencoe, MN 55336-0070

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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.
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Gopher State One Call 811 or 1-800-252-1166



Line foreman Craig Marti prepares to do a pole top rescue of the mannequin while other MCPA line workers await their turn at being tested.



Line foreman Grant Miller watches as apprentice line worker Jared Klein tries the rescue procedure.

Pick up the phone before you pick up the shovel



It is very important that consumers understand how the Gopher State One Call system works. Whether you plan to dig in post holes for a deck or flagpole, plant a tree, or trench in electric lines to a garage or outdoor appliance, you need to call Gopher State One Call 48 hours before you plan to dig (excluding weekends and holidays).

The Gopher State One Call system is designed to notify utilities which might have underground facilities in the area where digging is planned. The utilities then mark any lines they have in the immediate area. **It is the homeowner's responsibility to locate or hire someone to locate their own personal underground facilities such as underground electric wires between the meter and the house, the meter or house and other buildings, buried gas lines for propane**









tanks, lamps, or pool heaters, water lines, sewer lines, telephone lines, sprinkler systems, invisible fences, etc. The Cooperative does not locate buried wires that are the homeowner's responsibility. You should hire a licensed electrician or cable locating company to mark your personal lines. A list of private locators is available on the www.gopherstateonecall.org site.

First, you need to call Gopher State one Call two business days before you plan to start digging. You call either "811" or 1-800-252-1166. Be prepared with the following information:

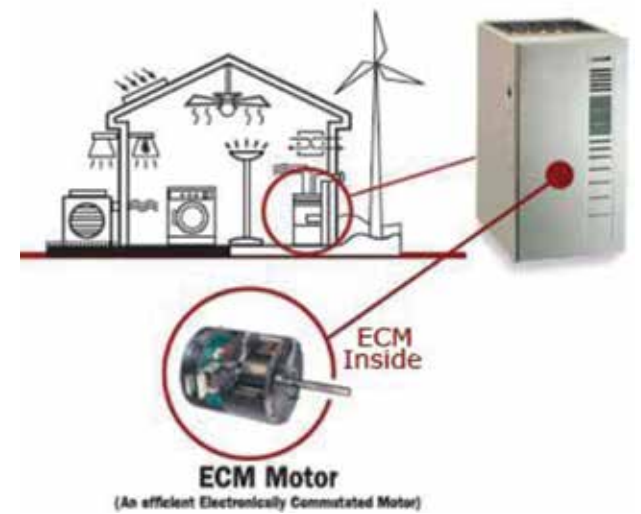
- Your name, home phone # and work/cell phone #.
- When do you plan to begin work?
- How many days will digging take?
- Type of work you will be doing?
- County and city/township where work will be done?
- Address and nearest cross streets or township range/section where work will be done?
- Where will you be digging on the property?
- Will any digging be done in road right-of-way?

Gopher State One Call will call any utilities with facilities in the area you plan to dig. They will not notify anyone regarding your personal buried facilities. That is the property owner's responsibility. Utilities will locate themselves or hire a locating company to find and mark their facilities with colored flags. See the color code chart for meaning of flag colors. No one should ever remove flags before work is completed. They are there to mark lines for the safety of all digging in the area.

Color Code Chart For Marking Underground Utility Lines

	WHITE —	PROPOSED EXCAVATION
	PINK —	TEMPORARY SURVEY MARKINGS
	RED —	ELECTRIC POWER LINES, CABLES, CONDUIT AND LIGHTING CABLES
	YELLOW —	GAS, OIL, STEAM, PETROLEUM OR GASEOUS MATERIALS
	ORANGE —	COMMUNICATION, ALARM OR SIGNAL LINES, CABLE OR CONDUIT
	BLUE —	POTABLE WATER
	PURPLE —	RECLAIMED WATER, IRRIGATION AND SLURRY LINES
	GREEN —	SEWER AND DRAIN LINES

What is an Electronically Commutated Motor (ECM) and Why Do You Want it "Inside"?



ECM is a brushless DC motor with all of its speed and torque controls built in. This allows the motor to adjust its speed to ensure the optimal airflow at all times. In addition, ECMs are considerably quieter and less expensive to operate than conventional furnace fans.

ECMs use significantly less electricity to deliver the warm air from the furnace and the cool air from the Central Air Conditioner (CAC) throughout your home. With their adjustable speed design, furnaces with an ECM operate with as little as 80 watts of electricity. That's as much as 75% less energy than standard fan motors which run on high most of the time.

Forced Air Furnaces (gas, electric, propane, oil) equipped with an ECM inside have lower annual operating costs (25-75% less) depending on how you use the furnace fan. Some homeowners choose to run their fan continuously to help even out warm and cold spots in their home or to provide extra air filtration which may be valued due to health concerns. Consult a HVAC contractor about a new high-efficiency air source heat pump system with an ECM motor. If your current furnace or heat pump is less than 10 years old, it may be the perfect time to replace the standard, ineffective PSC motor with a high-efficiency ECM Replacement Fan Motor. Simply contact an HVAC contractor and tell him or her you want an ECM to replace your current furnace fan.

An ECM must be installed by a registered contractor (see list on Co-op's website or at www.hvacreducation.net) to qualify for a rebate. There is a limit of one per dwelling.

What are the benefits of an ECM in a forced air furnace or heat pump air handler?

- Lower annual operating costs (25-75% per year) based on usage
- You save energy every time your HVAC system is operating (every unit of energy (kWh) saved is one less you have to pay for)
- As little as 80 watts of power required for operation—that's less than a standard electric light bulb
- Reduced temperature fluctuation
- Quieter running system
- Easier to maintain an even temperature throughout the home
- Increased comfort
- Lower drying effect of indoor air during the winter heating season
- Reduced stale air and improved air quality

Seeing is believing: Economic advantage of coal may not be apparent to some



Guest Editorial by
Dick Hagen

Land Mines opinion column
by Dick Hagen appeared
in the August 8 issue of
The Land. He is a staff
writer for *The Land*. This
article is reprinted with the
permission of the author
and *The Land*, a Minnesota
farm publication.

Dick Hagen

Meeker and McLeod
Cooperatives offer tours for

their members to the North Dakota power plant region,
similar to the tour Dick Hagen participated in. Meeker
Cooperative is a member of Basin Electric Power
Cooperative and purchases some of its power
from Basin.

Seeing is believing...those three words
most succinctly describe the intriguing
adventure that I, along with 46 members of
the Renville Sibley Cooperative Power Association,
enjoyed July 14-16 as we traveled by luxury motor
coach to western North Dakota. Our objective:
the incredible lignite coal mining operations of
Basin Electric Power Cooperative headquartered at
Beulah, ND.

Our 2 overnights were at Ramkota Hotel, Bismarck,
a spacious facility with good food and 4 pillows
per bed. But driving the 80 miles the next morning
to Beulah was just the start of some great sights.
I've traveled North Dakota before in mid-summer
but have never seen the state so lush, green, and
filled with water. Lakes were full (more lakes than I
imagined), livestock reservoirs were full.....and lots
of lowland areas still holding water, too.

Beulah is a cozy little town a few miles south of
Lake Sakakawea of Lewis and Clark fame. A few
miles further west on this gently rolling prairie we
began to see evidence of coal mining. First on the
horizon were huge draglines with booms reaching
215 feet tall (17 stories). Each dragline weighs 13
million pounds and is electrically powered; 23,000
volts of electricity delivering 12,000 horsepower!
Each bucket on these monsters holds 123 cubic
yards, the equivalent of 2,700 bushels of wheat and/
or corn or 4 Suburban's.

Coal haulers are equally gigantic. Called Kress
CH300, they have a 300-ton capacity! End dump
trucks are Caterpillar 793's with 240-ton capacity.
Often you would see women driving these rigs.
Starting salary is about \$38 per hour. Get seasoned
a bit and become a 'senior' driver and the pay is



Renville-Sibley Co-op Power Association recently conducted a member energy tour to North Dakota. Dick Hagen was part of this group.

\$48 an hour. So employee turnover at this operation
is minimal.

Our able bus driver Dave Weinger even jockeyed
his big Thielen rig down into the level floor of the
coal mine so we could see up close and personal
the size of this huge equipment. And the reason for
electric power rather than gas is simply safety...
guarding against fire from an internal combustion
power source.

At the Freedom Mine, about 700 acres are mined
and reclaimed each year. Local farmers and
ranchers utilize over 12,000 acres of reclaimed land
by grazing cattle and growing cash crops like corn,
soybeans, even a few canola fields.

The Freedom Mine is America's largest lignite coal
mine producing approximately 15 million tons of
coal annually. The lignite was formed between 55
and 60 million years ago. Lignite is found about
100 feet under the surface so lots of overburden
is removed before getting down to the coal seam
which can vary from about 10 feet to 20 feet thick.

Coal Facts. Chew on these bullet points:

- The United States has one-fourth of the world's
supply of coal---that equates to four times more
energy in its coal reserves than all the oil in Saudi
Arabia.
- Since 1970, the U.S. population has grown 48%
and coal fueled electricity has increased 188%,
while pollutants in emissions have decreased 84%.
- Lignite coal is the lowest-cost dependable supply
of electricity. Nearly half of America's electricity
is coal generated; in North Dakota, over 82% of
electricity is generated by coal.
- The average retail electricity cost for North
Dakota is 6.81 cents/kwh (87% coal), compared
with New York at 17.55 cents/kwh (10% coal) and
California at 14.43 cents/kwh (1% coal).
- North Dakota, home to the largest deposit of
lignite in the world, has 25 billion tons of lignite
reserves...enough to last 800 years at today's usage
rate.
- Total annual taxes paid by the lignite industry in
North Dakota were more than \$90 million in 2011,
totaling over \$1 billion since 1975.
- North Dakota is one of only 12 states capable of
meeting the Environmental Protection Agency's
stringent ambient air quality standards.

So how can you not be excited about the future of
coal as the lowest cost, most dependable source of
electrical energy? Yet we know only too well that
the anti-coal voices across America continue to
ramp up their 'dirty air' campaign about coal-fired
power plants spewing carbon gas emissions into the
atmosphere. And the challenge appears to be firing
up here in Minnesota with Governor Mark Dayton
apparently more than willing to lead the parade.

At a recent 'Energy Conference' in Minneapolis
Governor Dayton challenged the energy policy and
business leaders in attendance to figure out a way
for Minnesota to eliminate coal from the state's
energy production! Dayton, who has been on
this stump before, said its time to start talking
details so that Minnesota could lead the nation.
He challenged his audience, "Tell us what a
timeline would look like, what has to happen
for that timeline to be met and what kind of
incentives or inducements do we need to provide
to make it happen."

His comments make one wonder if the Governor
is making a shutdown of Minnesota's coal fired
electrical power plants his major achievement
in the challenging world of providing energy
to Minnesota's extremely diverse economy.
Unanswered is the provocative question as to what
would Minnesota's energy costs be if coal were not
the major resource for delivering the state's
energy needs.

Perhaps as expected, Republican 'skeptics'
picked up on the Governor's words. Said State
Representative Pat Garafolo, (R-Farmington),
"Eliminating all coal power in Minnesota is a very
sneaky way for Democrats to kill precious metal
mining on the Iron Range." Garafolo's argument:
high energy prices = no mining.

So how do these comments by Minnesota's
Governor impact the future of coal-fired electrical
power? At this stage the logical response is that no
one really knows.

However, Steve Tomac, Senior Legislative
Representative for Basin Electric Power
Cooperative, Bismarck, ND, voices some concern.

“We’ve got a strong membership constituency. We generate and transmit electricity to 135 member rural electric systems (about 2.85 million consumers in nine states) but the issues are getting bigger and more difficult to solve. We need to make certain that our membership is politically active so we can hit these challenges face on.

“We used to think that if we got 25-30 members involved at the local level that would be enough to sway the decision in their District. Now we’re at the point where double or triple that number is needed to urge the value and importance of the rural electric cooperative network.

“The issues of the day are largely environmental, mostly coming directly from Washington D.C. It’s understandable that different people have different concerns about the environment. And today those folks are in the majority. We need to address their issues. We need to find reasonable approaches to their challenges.”

Do most people in the ‘energy world’ recognize that coal continues to be the lowest cost energy?
Tomas questions if the rest of the world considers the economic advantage of coal.

“We define that argument readily because we have already made the investment costs. At this stage we’ve depreciated only about half the useful life of our system. If there is a significant change in direction we not only have the ongoing costs of our existing generation but also the costs of the new generation that is more environmentally sensitive. It’s going to be a huge cost to our members if we can’t find a way to fully depreciate our coal facilities through long-time use but instead are forced to find new generation sources.”

Today, about 64% of Basin Electric’s generating portfolio comes from coal. What are the other resources? Natural gas has become a big player. Nuclear at 2% is likely to decrease. But renewables including wind, recovered energy generation and biogas are growing.

“We have a huge investment in wind generation. We’re experimenting with solar because it has a lot of public interest. But being forced to switch too rapidly away from coal would be a huge cost,” said Tomas.

Dakota Gasification Company, located adjacent to the Antelope Valley generating station, is a bright spot on the horizon of the North Dakota coal industry. Dating back to the fuel embargoes of the President Jimmy Carter era, gasification as a source of synthetic gas slowly emerged as a technology technique that potentially could generate new life for coal resources across America. However, that excitement fizzled after the gas embargoes were lifted in the 1970s.

But the potential opportunity persisted. A business called Great Plains Synfuels was launched in the early 1980’s. Because of various reasons the firm went bankrupt. The Department of the Interior put the facility up for sale. To the rescue was Dakota Gasification Company, a subsidiary of Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

“What we have found since about the year 2000 is that the co-products that we make at DGC have now become more of a profit center than the synthetic gas. Part of that is because natural gas is very low priced right now. But we have found that fertilizers, tar oil, liquid nitrogen, carbon dioxide and other products now make up more than 50% of our income.”

And with urea into the agricultural market in 2015, this new byproduct will significantly boost total revenues for DGC.

Also a surprisingly profitable venture has been the building of a pipeline to carry carbon dioxide into the Canadian oil fields (about 200 miles north). CO₂, essentially a waste product, is pumped into the rock structure of these oil fields and tremendously increases the ‘yield’ of crude oil.

Dakota Gasification handles about 28,000 tons of lignite each day with about 18,000 tons fed to the gasifiers. Intense combustion-induced heat from 14 gasifiers breaks the molecular structure of the coal to produce approximately 160 million cubic feet of synthetic natural gas daily, along with several agricultural and chemical co-products.

“Yes, the Dakota Gasification Company has a bright future because of these several co-products. It would be hugely expensive to build a similar plant today. Perhaps that will come around as the ‘greenhouse gas’ legislation moves forward and as our energy policy evolves,” summed up Tomas.

Meanwhile other nations are challenging the global warming and carbon tax issues. After the Australian Senate recently voted to repeal the country’s carbon tax of \$25 per ton, Joseph Bast, President, The Heartland Institute, commented, “The decision by Australia to repeal its carbon tax is further evidence that the global warming movement is now in global retreat. Australian voters realized the tax, which cost the average household more than \$500 a year, had zero impact on the climate while it destroyed jobs and punished the poor and people on fixed incomes.

“The odds of a new international treaty being adopted at the next United Nations meeting in Paris in 2015, already poor, have dropped even further. People all over the world are seeing through the hype and exaggeration of politicians and environmental activists. They understand that there simply is no climate crises, and they no longer are willing to passively accept the taxes, regulations and subsidies passed at the height of global warming alarmism.”

Canada, Japan, Germany, Spain, the UK and other nations have also been rolling back efforts to stifle conventional energy usage in the scientifically unsupportable war against carbon dioxide emissions said James Taylor, Senior Fellow for Environmental Policy, The Heartland Institute.

Editor’s note: Antelope Valley Station, Beulah, ND, is a lignite-based generating station with a capacity of 900 megawatts (MW). Constructed at a cost of \$1.9 billion, the station has two power units, each rated at 450 MW. One megawatt is generally sufficient for 800 homes. Antelope Valley annually consumes about 5.2 million tons of lignite supplied from the nearby Freedom Mine.

Industry News

Great River Energy celebrates 25 years of successful operation of Elk River Resource Recovery Project

More than 9 million tons of garbage has not ended up in a landfill, thanks to a unique project that started 25 years ago along the Mississippi River’s eastern bank in Elk River, Minn.

On Sept. 3, Great River Energy celebrated 25 years of successful operation of the Elk River Resource Recovery Project (ERRRP). Over the course of a year, the project avoids sending up to 300,000 tons of municipal solid waste to the landfill while converting that waste into renewable electricity and recovering recyclable materials.

The ERRRP consists of the Elk River Resource Processing Plant, which processes municipal solid waste into fuel for the Elk River Energy Recovery Station, which is a renewable waste-to-energy power plant that operates around the clock.

“The use of municipal solid waste is an important component of our diversified energy mix at Great River Energy. It allows us to generate electricity from a renewable resource while minimizing the waste that goes to a landfill. This benefits both our members and the environment,” said Rick Lancaster, Great River Energy vice president of generation.

Great River Energy hosted a program and tours recently for public officials and current and retired employees to celebrate the project’s milestone.

“This is a tribute to all the men and women who have helped operate the Elk River Resource Recovery Project in an efficient and reliable manner over the past 25 years. It’s also recognition of the partnerships we have built over the years with the local communities to utilize municipal solid waste in a beneficial way and to keep it out of landfills,” said Tim Steinbeck, Great River Energy’s manager of the Elk River Resource Recovery Project.

ERRRP contributes \$25 million annually to the local economy, 29 megawatts of renewable energy and 90 full-time jobs.

-Great River News

Notice to Members who are behind in your bill payments

The Cold Weather Rule may not protect you!

Make plans now to pay your bill to avoid being without electricity this winter.

McLeod Cooperative Power regularly disconnects the electrical supply of members who do not pay for the electricity they use. While we dislike to have to disconnect members, it would not be fair to our other members if we allow certain members to use electricity for free while our other members pay.

The Cold Weather Rule was adopted to protect some people from having their primary source of electric heat disconnected between October 15 and April 15. However, this law doesn't mean there won't be disconnections. The law says that a person must be making regular payments or have set up a payment plan and be honoring those arrangements to avoid being disconnected. If you are behind in your payments and are counting on the Cold Weather Rule to protect

you from making any payments during the winter, think again. McLeod Cooperative Power will be doing disconnections this winter in accordance with the law.

Please read the full Cold Weather Rule summary below. The list of agencies who can provide assistance to qualifying residents having trouble paying their bill is on this page and is also listed on the back of any electric bill with a delinquent balance.

It is up to the member to make payment arrangements or seek assistance to avoid disconnection. Please do not wait. The sooner you contact us, the greater the chance you will have electricity all winter long. Call today at 320-864-3148 or 1-800-494-6272 for details about applying for shut-off protection or to make a reasonable payment arrangement.

Cold Weather Rule Summary

The Cold Weather Rule, which is part of the Public Utilities Act, prohibits utilities from disconnecting a residential customer for nonpayment during the coldest months of the year if the customer has met the requirements under item 1 below. Your Cooperative strictly adheres to that law and offers sources of help for those unable to pay their bill. The law reads as follows:

1 An electric cooperative must not disconnect and must reconnect the utility service of a home between October 15 and April 15 if the disconnection affects the primary heat source for the residential unit and all of the following conditions are met:

- You declare an inability to pay.
- Your total household income is less than 50 percent of the State Median Income.
- Your account is current for the billing period immediately prior to Oct. 15, or if you have entered into a payment schedule and are reasonably current with your scheduled payments.
- You have contacted MCPA and have set up a payment arrangement.

If all of these items are not satisfied the electricity may be shut off due to non-payment.

2 Before disconnecting service to a residential customer during the cold weather months, the Cooperative will provide the following information to the customer:

- Notice of the proposed disconnection.
- A statement of the customer's rights and responsibilities.
- A list of local energy assistance providers.
- A statement explaining available time payment plans and other options to secure continued utility service.
- Inability to pay forms are available upon request.

3 Any residential customer whose service is disconnected on Oct. 15 may be reconnected if:

- The outstanding balance is paid.
- A mutually acceptable payment schedule is arranged.

Our members are important to McLeod Cooperative Power. We would rather work with you to set up a plan to pay your bill than disconnect your service.

4 The Cooperative will not disconnect service to a residential customer who has not responded to a disconnection notice without first investigating whether

the dwelling is actually unoccupied. This investigation shall include a personal visit to the dwelling. If the unit is found to be occupied, the Cooperative will immediately inform the occupant of his or her rights under this policy.

5 If an involuntary disconnection is to occur between Oct. 15 and April 15, then the disconnection will not occur on a Friday or on the day before a holiday.

6 Any disputes over a residential customer's inability to pay for service, income eligibility, reasonableness of payment schedule or any other issue which a customer could raise under the Cold Weather Rule shall be referred for hearing, after reasonable notice, to the Cooperative's Board of Directors. The Cooperative and the customer shall have the right to present evidence and be heard in person at that hearing. The Cooperative's Board of Directors shall issue a written decision within 10 days after the hearing. No disconnection shall occur while a dispute is pending.

7 The Cooperative will notify all members, prior to Oct. 15, of its Cold Weather Rule. Names and contact numbers for energy assistance providers are listed on this page.

Energy Assistance Providers

Kandiyohi, McLeod & Meeker Counties

Heartland Community Action Agency

PO Box 1359, 200 4th St. SW
Willmar, MN 56201

218 Main St. S., Suite 108,
Hutchinson MN 55350

Toll free: 800-992-1710

McLeod: 800-829-2132

McLeod County area

McLeod County Social Service Center

1805 Ford Avenue North
Glencoe, MN 55336

(320) 864-3144

(320) 484-4330 (Hutchinson

Toll-Free)

1-800-247-1756 (Toll Free)

Renville County area

Renville County Energy Assistance Program

105 S. 5th Street, Suite 203H,
Olivia, MN 56277

320-523-2202

1-800-363-2533

Sibley County area

Sibley County Public Health & Human Services

111 8th Street

Gaylord, MN 55334

(507) 237-4000

1-866-396-9963

MN Valley Action Council

110 6th Street, P.O. Box 87

Gaylord, MN 55334

(507) 237-2981

706 N. Victory Dr.

Mankato, MN 56001

(507) 345-6822

1-800-767-7139 (Toll Free)

Carver County area

Scott-Carver-Dakota Community Action Agency

712 Canterbury Road South

Shakopee, MN 55379

(952)-496-2125

Wright County area

Wright County Community Action

130 West Division Street

Maple Lake, MN 55358

(320) 963-6500

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HEARTLANDSS.COM

MCPA News Ads — Free want ad service for members.

Please limit your ad to nine words. Use the coupon printed below or available at McLeod Cooperative's front desk to submit your ad. Ads will be printed for one month only. Please submit a new ad if you want it published more than one month. Include your name and address, which will be used for identification purposes only. Ads must be received by **Sept. 26** to be included in the Oct. issue. Thank you!

Please run this ad in the next MCPA News

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Please check ad category

- Giveaway
 For Rent
 For Sale
 Wanted

Remember to limit your ad to nine words!

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____
 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____
 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____

Clip and Send to: McLeod Cooperative Power, ATTN: Classified Ads
 P.O. Box 70, Glencoe, MN 55336

For Sale - Miscellaneous

- 52" Sony Projection TV. \$125/OBO. 320-583-0471
- Kenmore used gas heavy duty dryer, all cycles. \$99. 320-583-0471
- Steel shipping container 8"x8"x40". Excellent shape. Cheap Storage. \$2,500. 612-987-4009
- 17" rear tine tiller, 5hp engine. 320-327-2472
- Variety steel fence post \$1/each. 320-587-8065
- Large outdoor animal cage, w/ legs. May be split for two. \$25. 320-587-7292

- Used concrete retaining wall blocks and used pavers. BO. 952-467-2139
- 27" Jenn-Air double wall oven. \$400. 952-955-2590
- Kitchen Aid dishwasher \$100. 952-955-2590
- 1999 Ford Expedition, 244,600 miles, good condition. \$1,350. 612-581-0448

For Sale - Farm

- Blue 2 horse trailer. Excellent shape. Stored inside. \$2,750. 952-657-2306
- Small square, mixed hay bales. 2014 crop. 507-351-1855

- 16" silage bunk. 320-587-8065
- Steel flare box. Running gear good condition. \$250/cash/OBO. 320-833-2090
- IH8530 Inline small square baler, new parts. \$7,500. 952-353-2489

Wanted

- Wanted chicken coop or small building. 952-457-9356
- 70's-80's Chevy trucks running or not. Reasonably priced. 320-864-5233
- Wanted farmland to rent. Within 50 miles of Hutchinson. 320-583-6983

Cleaning out your garage, attic or spare room? Try listing it for free in the MCPA classifieds!

These want ads are designed to help members buy items from or sell items to other members, or rent their property to members. They are not designed to advertise services or for-profit business pursuits. That is why we do not offer a services column and do not accept advertisements for commercial businesses.

Disclaimer – McLeod Cooperative Power Association (MCPA) assumes no liability for the content of, or reply to, any item posted. The party posting any advertisement assumes complete liability for the content of, and all replies to, any advertisement and for any claims against MCPA as a result thereof, and agrees to indemnify and hold MCPA harmless from all costs, expenses, liabilities and damages resulting from, or caused by, any advertisement or reply thereto.

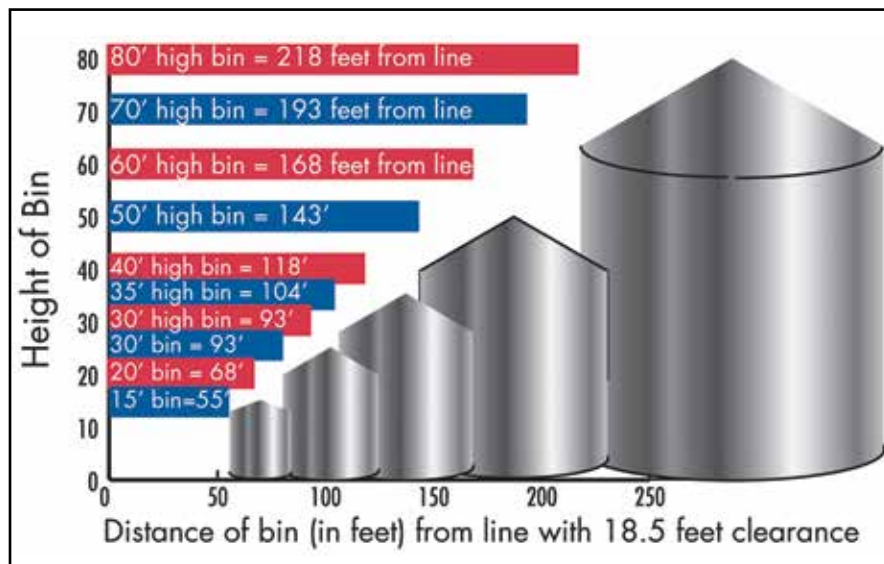
Comparative costs for space heating

You have to be able to buy heating fuel or propane for less than the following costs to be cheaper than the 5 cent per kWh electric rate. The competing fuel cost below are approximately = to the off-peak rate.

Fuel Oil standard efficiency furnace.....	\$1.23/gallon
Fuel Oil high efficiency furnace	\$1.64/gallon
Propane standard efficiency	\$0.81/gallon
Propane high efficiency.....	\$1.21/gallon
Natural gas standard efficiency	\$8.79/MCF
Natural gas high efficiency	\$13.18/MCF

What is the fixed charge on my bill?

The fixed charge covers a portion of the cost to provide you with access to electric service; so when you flip the switch, you have power. It covers items like substations, taxes, poles, wire, and meters. It supports our fleet/equipment, facility expenses (lighting, phones, heating, etc.), customer service, line maintenance, right-of-way clearing, billing expenses, monthly newsletter, and administrative expenses such as accounting functions, financing expenses, collection of delinquent accounts, crew dispatching, and information technology expenses. It does not include the cost of the energy (kWh) purchased.



New Grain Bins Near Overhead Power Lines

Members can save time, save money, and avoid aggravation by talking to McLeod Cooperative Power before locating new grain bins. The national Electrical Code (NEC) specifies minimum distances and clearance requirements that are required between grain bins and the nearest overhead power line.

As an example, a 35-foot tall grain bin cannot be placed closer than 104 feet away from the nearest overhead power line. Building a grain bin too close to the power line is not only a hazard to the farmers who use the bin, but may mean it will need to be moved, often at the member's expense.

Adequate clearances can reduce the risk of accidental contact between power lines, grain augers, elevators or grain probing devices. Planning electrical needs for crop drying and storage facilities that meet the requirements of the NEC can be explained more completely by the Cooperative's Engineering Department. Please call us at your earliest convenience so we can help you avoid costly mitigation that will be required to keep your electrical service in adherence to the NEC.

No Worries. Just Hot Water



Rebate for joining Water Storage Program is \$200

While rebate funds last, the Cooperative is providing a \$200 rebate for each member installing the Water Storage Program. Get on board now and start saving more than 50 percent on your water heating costs today by heating water at night on the storage rate.

By installing a Marathon water heater or equivalent high-efficiency water heater with at least 100 gallons of capacity on the storage program, you will receive the rebate plus savings every month of the year on your water heating. A water heater that is 85 gallons with a mixing valve qualifies as 100-plus gallons of capacity.

Call the Co-op to sign up for the storage water heating program today. Over 1,250 Co-op members participate. They are all saving over six cents per kWh on all of their water heating by charging their water heater from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. when excess energy is available. The larger tank is needed because the water heater remains off for the 16 hours from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m.



Minnesota Project farm survey

In June, surveys were mailed out to Cooperative accounts listed as "farm" accounts. Out of the more than 900 members which returned surveys, only 456 were still actively farming. Over the years many former farmsteads have become residential homes or small hobby farms.

It was interesting that of those 456 respondents who are actively farming, 50 were dairy farms, 402 had grain & drying operations, 35 had swine, 40 had poultry, 155 had beef cattle, and 186 were "other" operations. "Other" operations we assume to be sheep, goats, horses, llamas, alpacas, hay production, growing fruit/vegetables, or other miscellaneous operations. Many farms had both some kind of livestock plus a grain operation.

We appreciate the many members who took the time to complete and return the surveys. The drawing winner from those surveys was Wayne Franzen of Arlington. He won a \$100 gift card.

The next round of surveys will be more detailed and specifically directed to the type of farming operation

(dairy, swine, grain, etc.). They will be mailed in a month or two only to those farmers who provided their names and addresses on the first general surveys. Follow up after the second survey will make available to MCPA farmer-members specific grants, incentives, and energy efficiency suggestions to help them reduce their annual energy usage.

The Minnesota Project and McLeod Cooperative Power Association were awarded a grant by the Minnesota Department of Commerce to help rural electric cooperatives reach their farmer-members and make them aware of ways to reduce their energy use, and inform them of grants and rebates available to help lower production costs associated with energy consumption. The Minnesota Project and McLeod Co-op Power are reaching out to area farmers for this two year ag energy management project. We are hopeful that the successful methods we develop for increasing awareness of energy efficiency programs and targeted incentives for the farm sector will become a model for other rural electric cooperatives.



Many people are surprised when they get their electric bill after being gone on vacation for a week or two. Why? For most families the bill remains the same and does not go down, even if no one was home. If this happens to you, ask yourself the following questions:

- Was the water heater turned down or off?
- Did you turn up the thermostat (summer)?
- Did other appliances continue to run? Sump pump, dehumidifier, freezer, refrigerator, fans, power ventilator, heating and air conditioning equipment, lawn irrigation system, etc.
- Did you unplug items that use electricity even when they are in "standby" mode like computers, televisions, DVD players, DVR boxes, game consoles, phone chargers? They all take power even when no one is home.

For more information on energy savings tips, please contact the Cooperative office.

I recall a time when we couldn't get high-speed Internet in these parts.

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