



New location to solve garage issues and unite Co-op facilities onto one site



The McLeod Cooperative Power Board of Directors approved July 26 to combine and replace its facilities onto one site in the city of Glencoe East Industrial Park. After about a year of negotiations with the city of Glencoe for an approximate 10-acre site, the Co-op has the parcel it needs to remedy a too-small garage for today's large bucket trucks; gain efficiencies by co-locating the pole yard, garage, and offices on one site; provide better access for customers; and serve power to itself through construction of a new facility. The parcel purchase is pending upon final approval of the purchase terms by both parties.

MCPA's General Manager Carrie Buckley spoke about the new building project. "The current location has served us well for over 68 years, but it can no longer effectively meet the needs of the cooperative. After many years of examination, we believe now is the best time to undergo this much needed project." For at least ten years, and perhaps longer, the Board of Directors has been wrestling with the challenge of fitting our larger 21st century bucket trucks into our 1950s sized garage.

To date, the co-op has modified the facilities in whatever ways possible to accommodate the larger equipment. "We have replaced overhead doors with bi-fold doors and even jackhammered away the loading dock to fit in larger trucks. We marvel every day at the driving skills of our linemen as they back the

large trucks into spaces that, in some instances, have only an inch or two of clearance from a concrete wall," said Buckley.

Another dilemma with staying at the current location is that the cooperative's pole and material yards are located offsite. This has resulted in inefficiencies for our employees having to make multiple trips per day to access necessary materials. The design of the new facility will address that problem. The offices, warehouse, truck storage area, materials yard, and fleet parking will now be combined in one location. "This will greatly improve efficiency which will save our members money," stated Buckley.

The effect on rates was foremost on the minds of the Board of Directors and management during the planning process. "With a mission of providing safe, reliable and reasonably priced electrical service to enhance the lives of our members and the communities we serve, the board and management have determined combining and replacing our facilities helps achieve that goal," says MCPA Board Chairman Keith Peterson. "We value the trust our membership has placed in us to make sound decisions to benefit the electric cooperative as a whole."

See General Manager's Message on pg. 2 for details on new facility process.

MCPA is selling the former Agri-Fleet building

By the time you receive this issue, McLeod Co-op Power Association (MCPA) and Lazy Loon Brewing Co. should have completed the sale of the former Agri-Fleet building. The Co-op is happy to welcome a new business to McLeod County. Lazy Loon Brewing Co. will be moving its brewery from Victoria to Glencoe very soon. It also has plans to open a taproom.

"McLeod Co-op Power is pleased to be able to make a building that was not the right fit for our combined-facility needs available to a business that will have a positive economic development impact on Glencoe," said MCPA General Manager Carrie Buckley.

The building across the street from MCPA's office was a Big Bear farm supply store, and then an Agri-Fleet farm supply store. In 2009, when Agri-Fleet closed, it was purchased by MCPA to be used as an indoor storage facility for water heaters, electric heating equipment, and other equipment that did not fit in the Co-op's main building, with the thought that it might be utilized for a future Co-op expansion. It was

also used as a convenient staging/storage area during the AMI meter conversion project when thousands of new electric meters were delivered and then removed meters had to be retained for a period of time. The building was also under consideration as a site for a health food co-op in Glencoe about 2014.

Through MCPA's development of a master plan to assess the Co-op's current and future facility needs, it was determined that the 8,450 sq. ft. cement block building could not be renovated to work into meeting the Co-op's vehicle and equipment storage requirements.

Good fortune and the City of Glencoe Economic Development staff brought Jonathan Lueck, owner of Lazy Loon Brewing Co., to the Co-op as a possible buyer of the building before MCPA even listed it for sale. Lueck and the Co-op were able to complete negotiations and move ahead to closing on the property by early August. The brewery and taproom are planned to open in the fall, after equipment installation and state inspection are completed.



See page 3 for more on the Lazy Loon Brewing Co.

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A good night's sleep: *Brought to you by electricity*

When you go to bed, you recharge your body and brain for the next day.

The same can be said for your cellphone, tablet and electric toothbrush that quietly charge in preparation for morning.

While you sleep, a ceiling fan is providing the cool temps (and white noise) you need to get a full eight hours. If you like it warm, how about an electric blanket?

Early risers depend on an alarm clock to get themselves out of

bed and lights to speed their adjustment to a new day.

At the same time, the refrigerator runs through the night to keep the milk and eggs fresh and chill the orange juice.

And, if you are one of the lucky few with an electric vehicle, the charger in your garage fuels your car overnight to get you to work or school in the morning.

Thanks to McLeod Co-op Power, electricity works hard, even while you sleep.

YEAR TO DATE FINANCIALS		
Through Septemeber	2018	2017
Operating Revenue	\$ 9,824,949	\$ 9,298,623
Cost of Purchased Power	\$ 5,838,674	\$ 5,606,927
Other Operating Expenses	\$ 3,905,680	\$ 3,595,599
Total Cost of Electric Service	\$ 9,744,354	\$ 9,202,526
Operating Margins	\$ 80,595	\$ 96,097
Non Operating Margins	\$ 170,243	\$ 148,445
Total Margins	\$ 250,838	\$ 244,542
kWh's Sold	79,966,385	73,701,487
Member Services Billed	6,766	6,666
Avg kWh Used, Residential/Month	1,475	1,359

Manager's Message — by Carrie L. Buckley, General Manager



It's true that pictures tell a thousand words



From well before I started in December 2014, our Board of Directors has been wrestling with the challenge of fitting our 21st century bucket trucks into our 1950s sized garage.

In August 2015 our Board of Directors set a strategic goal to assess the need for a new or expanded garage. With those marching orders, we laid out the following plan;

- Form a Facility Committee comprised of a cross section of employees and board directors to evaluate how best to go forward with our facilities
- Competitively selected Adolphson & Peterson Contractors and Brunton Architects to prepare a Master Plan for our facilities.
- Evaluated our needs:
 - Tight clearances for bucket trucks
 - Inefficiencies of having the pole yard two miles from the office and garage
 - Easier access for customers
 - Have facilities served by our own electric lines
 - Recommend a plan to our Board of Directors

After much deliberation from a Facilities Committee

that doesn't like to spend a dime more than necessary, the recommendation to our Board was to combine all our facilities under a new roof at one location.

Concern for our community, one of our Cooperative principles, is always foremost in our discussions. Our Board of Directors came upon the idea of working with the City of Glencoe for possible locations. The City had an industrial lot complete

with water and sewer development which is more than sufficient to serve our project. Even though the lot's power needs are technically served by the Glencoe Light and Power Commission, they have agreed to work with us to allow bringing in our own power lines from near Highway 212, which is only a short distance away.

As I write this, it all seems like it was so easy to get to this point in the decision process, right? Well, note the above date was August 2015—three years have passed to get to this point. In those three years we have tried to explore as many land options, remodeling options, and new building options as possible to insure our members are getting the best value for their dollar.

After all of that examination, it was a well-reasoned decision to move forward with a new and combined facility. A decision that if delayed to a future year, would ultimately be more expensive. Tackling the difficult decision showed leadership from your Board of Directors.

Proud to keep your lights on,
Carrie

Board of Directors

District 1 - Oria Brinkmeier, 320-485-2554

Hollywood Twp. in Carver Co., Winsted Twp. in McLeod Co., Victor, Woodland, & Franklin Twps. in Wright Co.

District 2 - Joe Griebie, Vice President, 320-779-1101

Hassan Valley, Sumter & Rich Valley Twps. in McLeod Co.

District 3 - David Resch, 952-449-1793

Bergen, Helen, & Glencoe Twps. in McLeod Co.

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dkirtz@mcleodcoop.com

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rhlavka@mcleodcoop.com

Hutchinson & Hale Twps. in McLeod Co., Collinwood Twp. in Meeker Co.

District 8 - Keith Peterson, President

kpeterson@mcleodcoop.com

Collins & Round Grove Twps. in McLeod Co, Martinsburg, Bandon, & Wellington Twps. in Renville Co., Grafton, Moltke, Bismarck, Transit, & Alfsborg Twps. in Sibley Co.

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Watertown, Camden, & Young America Twps. in Carver County

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All member story ideas and comments are welcome.
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McLeod Cooperative Power Association is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Lazy Loon Brewing Company is expanding its Carver County roots into McLeod County



Jonathan Lueck was raised in Watertown, Minnesota, where his dad and uncle ran the Edelstein's clothing and shoe store for decades. His profession is accounting and law and works to help small business start, develop and grow. In 2014, he started a craft brewery at his home in Victoria. His beer brewing and canning business started on a small scale and has been growing.

In 2016, Jonathan and his wife Tammy purchased the bowling alley in Norwood Young America and began retailing his Lazy Loon German-style beers at what they coincidentally renamed Lazy Loon Lanes. Now, only four years after starting his brewery business, it is expanding into McLeod County with the purchase of the former Agri-Fleet building from McLeod Co-op Power. Soon a taproom and brewery will be opening on 13th Street (Hwy. 22) in Glencoe.

Two years ago, when they purchased the bowling alley in Norwood Young America, it was with the intention of turning it into a brewery and taproom. However, after developing it into a clean friendly family environment with great food, that business is doing well with the bowling, food, and beer. Instead of disrupting a good thing, he continued his search for a building that could house both the brewery and a taproom. That is what lead him to the former Agri-fleet building in Glencoe.

Jonathan has a passion for brewing beer. He enjoys designing different recipes and coming up with creative new brews. He has been quoted as preferring the clean and crisp lagers that do not have too much hops. He has about ten main recipes but likes to try new tastes. His popular "Oktoberfest" variety was the beer of last year's Stiftungsfest celebration in Norwood Young America. In addition to the Stiftungsfest beer, Lazy Loon brews private label beer for retailers and events.

Plans for the Glencoe building include moving the brewery equipment to the new location, restarting operations there, and adding a taproom for public beer sales after his liquor license is finalized. Jonathan hopes to eventually serve a menu of food options such as homemade pizza, burgers, and sandwiches. He would also consider bringing in food trucks, live entertainment or fun activities that people can do while they enjoy their Lazy Loon. It will be interesting to see what creative idea Jonathan has brewing next.

Currently, off-sale canned beer is available only at Lazy Loon Lanes. Their on-tap porters to lagers are available at the Lazy Loon Lanes. A full list of their beers is available on their website at <http://lazyloonbrewing.com> and follow them on Facebook to keep up with the new styles and offerings.

Remodeling? Build in Energy Efficiency

Are you planning a home renovation? It's a great chance to remake your energy bill as well. From lighting to appliances to building materials, the choices you make can help improve the comfort and efficiency of your home.

Adding new appliances? Purchase an ENERGY STAR qualified refrigerator and dishwasher; they use less energy than standard models. Install high-efficiency LED fixtures and lamps for under-cabinet and ceiling lighting. LEDs use 75 percent less energy than conventional lamps and last a lot longer.

Install WaterSense labeled low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators to conserve water and reduce your water heating costs. While you're at it, seal air leaks and install the appropriate insulation in the walls behind tubs and showers. Finally, control moisture and save energy by installing ENERGY STAR qualified ventilation fans.

By finishing your basement, you can add living space without adding to your energy budget. Insulate basement walls and crawl spaces based on recommended levels. Seal air leaks around plumbing and wiring holes on outside walls. Replace older, single-pane windows with glass block or ENERGY STAR certified high-performance windows. It's also a great opportunity to replace your old clothes washer and dryer with new, ENERGY STAR models.



A bigger home doesn't necessarily mean bigger energy bills. Ask your contractor about advanced framing techniques. Advanced framing can help improve the insulating value of your new walls, while reducing material and labor costs. Make sure all new windows, skylights and doors are ENERGY STAR qualified.

If you're not planning a major renovation, you can still improve the efficiency of your home. Hire a qualified energy auditor to assess your home. You'll receive a customized list of energy-saving recommendations that will improve comfort and efficiency all year long.

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Meet the people behind your power

For us, it's more than a job, it's helping friends and neighbors. We're dedicated to keeping your lights on and improving the quality of life for our members.

**Ryan Schuette
Lineman**

**McLeod Co-op Power member
Youth athletic coach
Church/community volunteer**

**McLEOD
CO-OP POWER**

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The Latest and Greatest in Smart Home Technologies

Actual smart home gadgets and technologies continue to evolve, but the mobile app seems to be taking the lead. Let's catch up with the advances in some key areas.

Smart thermostats deserve top billing as they were truly the first smart device to become mainstream. Product choices abound with smart options for baseboard electric being developed, while the focus remains solidly on convenience, energy savings and peace of mind.

Geofencing is one of the best enhancements in this category. Link your smart thermostat to your smart phone, set a radius around your domicile, and whenever you cross that boundary your thermostat goes into away or return mode, depending on which way you are heading.

Smart security is surging. Smart door locks were the first entrants in this category. More recently, video doorbells have entered the fray where you can see who is at the door from anywhere in the world. Very slick.

Wireless cameras have dropped in price, allowing you to canvas your home and property to keep an eye on things anywhere. Get an alert? Open the app and find out what's going on at home. Heartland Security offers video security systems that help you keep watch over your home and keep you informed about possible break-ins, or rowdy teens at home alone.

Smart smoke and CO sensors are key in the safety sector, with the capability of sending alerts to your phone, allowing remote status checks and silencing alarms from the app—all without sacrificing that awful, ear-splitting alert we have come to love.

Smart appliances are slowly grinding forward. Refrigerators with cameras allow you to check for needed items while at the grocery store, and dryers sense when electric use is highest and turn off—talk about demand response! Even HVAC systems, including window air conditioners, are sporting mobile apps these days.

There is not a huge amount of automation for stoves and cooktops. Controlling this appliance remotely seems too dangerous unless the feature is to turn it off. In that case, chalk up another one for peace of mind by resolving that nagging vacation worry, "Did I turn the stove off?"

Smart lighting seems to have become a convergence of mood, efficiency, convenience and security. This is where a smart hub and its software might make sense. Setting up a coordinated lighting schedule is easier from a single interface. Create "scenes" for individual rooms or for the whole house. For security, grab a



Heartland Security has a Skybell doorbell system that allows you to see who's at the door before opening, or while away. Call 888-264-6380 for details.



An electronic voice-controlled assistant such as an Echo with Alexa programming allows you to order your favorite items online, control music, light levels, and much more, on spoken command.

scene that gives your castle a lived-in look.

Perhaps the coolest new entrants are the voice-controlled assistants. These are receiving a lot of attention and, depending on the capabilities they are given, have the potential to command everything via voice, freeing you from the tedium of opening an app to control something. An Amazon Echo with Alexa, for instance, can check your calendar, weather, traffic, and sports scores, manage to-do and shopping lists, control your compatible smart lights, thermostats, garage doors, sprinklers, and more, all at your voice command.

The smart home circa 2018 is a lot closer to the cartoon vision of the "Jetsons". With the ease of installation, programming and use enabled by wireless technology and smart phone apps, anyone not already engaged with smart home tech should at least consider dipping a toe in the water.



A smart refrigerator allows you to look inside the fridge while grocery shopping to see what's needed. Some models keep track of expiration dates of groceries and allow you to order groceries by voice command.

Source: Tom Tate writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation's landscape.

Stanley Cup visits Bird Island

For professional hockey teams, the Lord Stanley Cup is the prize to win. The Stanley Cup, as it's commonly called, is the championship trophy awarded annually to the National Hockey League (NHL) playoff winner. It is the oldest existing trophy to be awarded to a professional sports franchise. Originally commissioned in 1892 as the Dominion Hockey Challenge Cup, the trophy is named after Lord Stanley of Preston, then-Governor General of Canada, who donated it as an award to Canada's top-ranking amateur ice hockey club.

This year's NHL Conference Stanley Cup winner is the Washington Capitals; the first time they had won the honor. It's a tradition that each member of the winning team is able to bring the cup home for a day to celebrate. The team's head trainer, Jason Serbus, brought the cup home to his hometown of Bird Island,



Meeker Co-op employee and hockey fan Dan Schrupp, who played on the Elk River High School hockey team, Laura Shoutz, Litchfield Princess, whom Meeker Cooperative sponsored in the Watercade coronation, Communications Specialist Becky Sorenson, and Co-op Mascot, Willie Wiredhand. Professional photography by Bruce Kluckhohn.

in Renville County. As part of the celebration, Serbus allowed photo ops with the cup in exchange for a free-will donation to the Tim Orth Memorial Foundation. In honor of Tim Orth, a local hockey player

who died of a brain tumor, the Foundation assists families of children in west central Minnesota facing substantial medical expenses from illness or injury.

Prior to Serbus joining the Capitals, he was head athletic trainer with the Arizona Coyotes, as well as for the USA Hockey U-17 team, the U.S. Men's National Team in both Russia and Switzerland. He worked three years as assistant trainer for the Tampa Bay Lightning and four years with the Pensacola Ice Pilots of the ECHL, earning him the title "Athletic Trainer of the Year for Professional Sports." These are just a few of the many accolades he has received over the years.

Meeker Cooperative and McLeod Co-op power both have members in Renville County. McLeod Co-op Power's Operation Round Up® program has also provided grant money to the Tim Orth Memorial Foundation, which does great things for children in their service territory.



Be Safe

Always call before you dig

CALL 811 BEFORE YOU DIG. IT'S THE LAW.

UNDERGROUND POWER LINES can be just as dangerous as overhead power lines. Avoid serious injury and property damage by calling 811 before you dig to have underground facilities marked.

- Call Gopher State One Call at 811 at least two business days prior to a dig.
- Dial 811 or 1-800-252-1166 during normal business hours; this service is free for homeowners.
- Minnesota state law requires you to call.
- If you damage a line, you may be financially responsible for repairs.

You may also submit your dig information at gopherstateonecall.org/submit.

Great River Energy—Powering what's possible

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Industry News

Great River Energy sets 50% renewable goal by 2030

STANTON — It took hundreds of workers nearly three years to build a coal-fired plant near Stanton. A small crew out of Houston will make it disappear in half the time. When it was built in the mid-'60s, it was made tough enough to last for the ages. But today, the old UPA Stanton Station — the first commercial scale lignite plant in Coal Country — is slowly disappearing from alongside the Missouri River. It's going, going, gone with new environmental currents that made continued operation financially untenable.

Deconstruction amounts to one huge recycle and salvage project. That includes structural steel, non-ferrous metals, such as aluminum, copper tubing and brass and the concrete and brick crushed to backfill subgrade basements. A few pumps, motors and the plant's turbines were salvaged and resold, but most material is sorted off and shipped to a smelter plant.

Structures at the Great River Energy Stanton Station are tipped over and then stripped down, with virtually all materials shipped off for recycling. It'll take the crew six months — all the coming winter and into spring — to strip the massive boiler and turbine structures down to nothing.

~ Bismarck Tribune

Former MCPA Director Roger Karstens passed away

The Co-op family is saddened to announce the death of former director Roger Karstens of Hutchinson. He passed away in July. Roger served MCPA for 27 years — from 1990 through 2017.



May 2018 Outage Summary

During June there were 65 outages reported on the Cooperative's system. Twelve outages were due to lightning, 10 were due to overhanging or dead trees, and 8 were planned outages.

The largest outage was on June 18 about 1:30 a.m. and affected 72 members north of Glencoe. Cause was an animal that climbed the pole. Members were out of power for two and a half hours.

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.

Energy Star Appliance Rebates for 2018

Dehumidifiers.....	\$25
Dryers.....	\$25
Refrigerators & Freezer (Max of 2/year)	
Refrigerator harvest	\$75
Refrigerator w/recycling	\$75
Freezer Harvest	\$75
Freezer with recycling	\$75
AC Tune Up	\$25
Ductless ASHP	
Delivered Fuels.....	\$300
Primary Electric heat.....	\$500
ECM.....	\$50
GSHP (\$/ton).....	\$400
QI ASHP	
SEER 14.5	\$480
SEER 15	\$580
SEER 16	\$630
ETS Space Heat - per kW	\$50
ETS Water Heating	
100 gallon minimum capacity	\$400

Heat Pump Water Heater	
50 gallon minimum capacity	\$500
Swim Pool ASHP	\$400
Pool Variable Speed Pump.....	\$200
LED Light Bulbs.....	\$2
LED Yard Light	\$60
Electric Vehicle & Chargewise	\$500

This is a residential summary only. The Co-op also offers agricultural, commercial and industrial rebates.

There is a \$2,000 maximum rebate per member per year. Only ETS space heating does not have a \$2,000 maximum cap. All rebates are on a first come, first serve basis, so please turn in your paperwork promptly.

Most downloadable rebate forms are on the Co-op's website www.mcleodcoop.com. Please read the details on specific rebate forms, as some products have limits, require ENERGY STAR certification or other requirements.

Air Source Heat Pump rebate forms must be completed by the installing contractor. Rebates for high efficiency air source heat pumps require installation by a "registered contractor" which has been designated as a QUALITY INSTALLER and is listed on the hvacaducation.net website. A list of all "registered contractors" in Minnesota is on www.mcleodcoop.com website. There are no rebates for central air conditioners. The Co-op encourages any member replacing a central air conditioner to upgrade to an ENERGY STAR rated air source heat pump.

LED yard lights must be installed on consumer owned building or facilities. Lights cannot be installed on Co-op power poles. Rebate for recycled refrigerator or freezer must be for removal of old but still operating unit from location served by MCPA, and recycling documentation required.

Reminder: Funds should be in your account at the time the check is written

MCPA will begin electronically depositing checks from members in a few months. This change is being made to see increased efficiencies in the deposit process and accounting labor. It should have no noticeable effect on most members.

However, if you give the Co-op a check and hope you have a day or two to get funds into your account to cover it, you may run into difficulties. We are reminding members that funds should be in the account at the time you write a check to the Co-op as it could be electronically presented for payment shortly after you pay your electric bill.

MCPA News Ads — Free want ad service for members

Please limit your ad to nine words. Use the coupon printed here 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 August 28 to be included in the September issue. Thank you!

Please run this ad in the next MCPA News

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

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

Please check ad category

☐ Giveaway

☐ For Rent

☐ For Sale

☐ Wanted

For Sale Miscellaneous

- 4ft X 4ft X 8ft garden shed from old barn boards. \$800. 320-510-1428
- Wagner paint sprayer #1955, never used. \$225. 320-238-2272
- 2 male mini mules. 507-380-1985
- 2 garage door openers. 320-522-2167
- 2yr old used green steel roofing 90 panels. 320-583-5388
- Used lumber 2in X 4in, 2in X 6in, & others. Half price of new. 320-587-7746
- Portable air compressor w/5hp Honda gas engine. \$325. 320-310-1987

For Sale Farm

- Case IH RRX562 round baler. \$4,250. 320-327-2450
- Sickle mower mounted. 320-522-2167
- NH#54A bale thrower. 320-522-2167

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.

- J&M gravity box on 10-ton MN gear. Excellent. 507-327-1869
- 80bu grain bin w/hopper. 320-583-5388
- 7ft Int cycle mower. Fits multiple farm tractors. 612-803-4475
- DMI530 ripper \$8,950. 320-333-2177
- Feterl 10X60 auger PTO. \$1,750. 320-333-2177
- 2 Goodyear used tractor tires, 18-4, 28, 6ply. 320-864-4496

Wanted

- Unwanted riding lawn mowers. Free pickup. 320-582-9207

Maintenance Checklist

Maintain your equipment to prevent future problems and unwanted costs. Keep your cooling and heating system at peak performance by having a contractor do annual pre-season check-ups. Contractors get busy once summer and winter come, so it's best to check the cooling system in the spring and the heating system in the fall. To remember, you might plan the check-ups around the time changes in the spring and fall.

A typical maintenance check-up should include the following.

- ✓ Check thermostat settings to ensure the cooling and heating system keeps you comfortable when you are home and saves energy while you are away.
- ✓ Tighten all electrical connections and measure voltage and current on motors. Faulty electrical connections can cause unsafe operation of your system and reduce the life of major components.
- ✓ Lubricate all moving parts. Parts that lack lubrication cause friction in motors and increases the amount of electricity you use.

- ✓ Check and inspect the condensate drain in your central air conditioner, furnace and/or heat pump (when in cooling mode). A plugged drain can cause water damage in the house and affect indoor humidity levels.
- ✓ Check controls of the system to ensure proper and safe operation. Check the starting cycle of the equipment to assure the system starts, operates, and shuts off properly.

Cooling Specific

- ✓ Clean evaporator and condenser air conditioning coils. Dirty coils reduce the system's ability to cool your home and cause the system to run longer, increasing energy costs and reducing the life of the equipment.
- ✓ Check your central air conditioner's refrigerant level and adjust if necessary. Too much or too little refrigerant will make your system less efficient increasing energy costs and reducing the life of the equipment.

- ✓ Clean and adjust blower components to provide proper system airflow for greater comfort levels. Airflow problems can reduce your system's efficiency by up to 15 percent.

Heating Specific

- ✓ Check all gas (or oil) connections, gas pressure, burner combustion and heat exchanger. Improperly operating gas (or oil) connections are a fire hazard and can contribute to health problems. A dirty burner or cracked heat exchanger causes improper burner operation. Either can cause the equipment to operate less safely and efficiently.

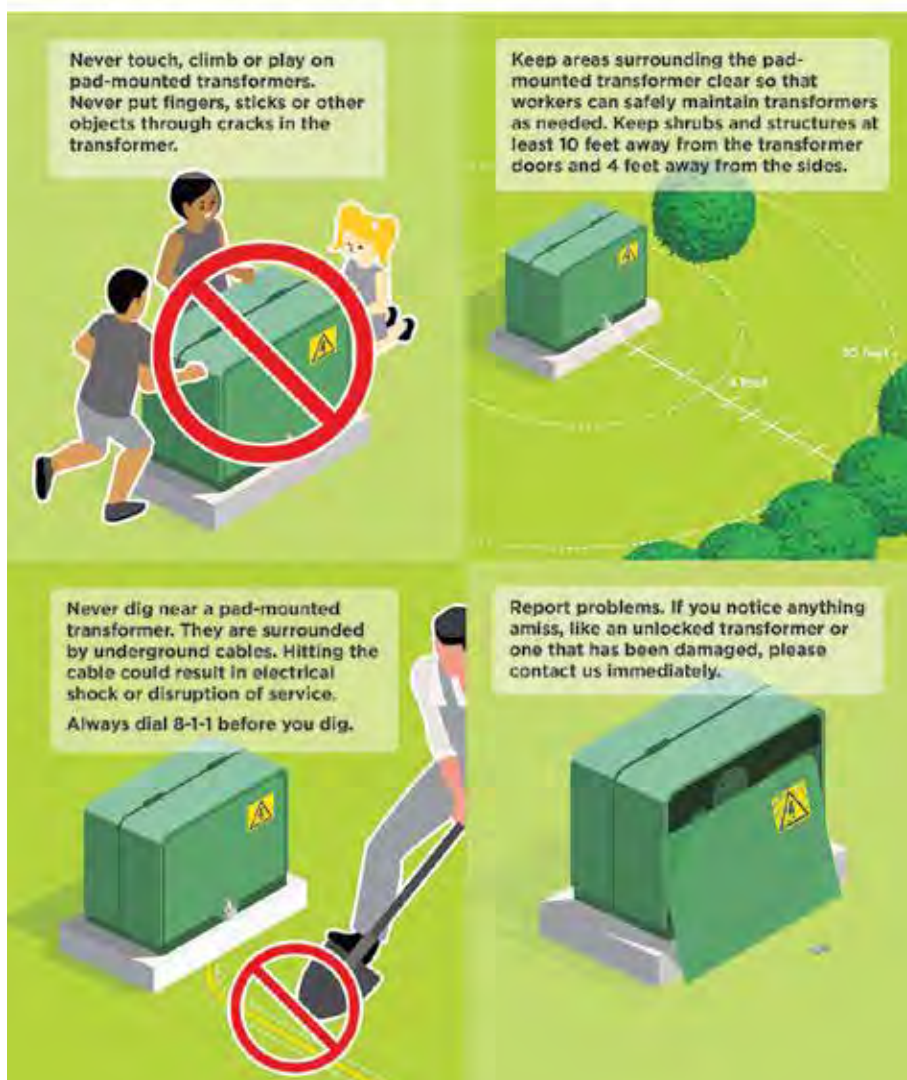
Actions To Do Yourself

- ✓ Inspect, clean, or change air filters once a month in your central air conditioner, furnace, and/or heat pump. Your contractor can show you how to do this. A dirty filter can increase energy costs and damage your equipment, leading to early failure.



Avoid the Big Green Box

Please stay away from pad-mounted transformers (the big green box). While safe, they are not meant for touching, climbing or playing. Pad-mounted transformers carry high voltages of electricity that serve many homes in our communities.



Automatic standby generator can keep everything in your house running, even when you are not there

Storm season has been a blunt reminder of how inconvenient life can be when Mother Nature knocks out the electricity. We are suddenly faced with panic when the rain is pouring down and the sump pump is not running!

To give our members a peaceful assurance that even when the grid goes out, the power in the house does not need to go out, the Co-op offers automatic standby generators that can power almost everything in the house. The generator will automatically start when power goes out and shut off after power is restored. No need to haul out a portable unit or sit in the dark.

McLeod Co-op Power has partnered with Briggs &

Stratton, a 100-year-old U.S. company, on 12-200 kW generators that can power homes, farms or businesses. The Co-op does a turn-key installation, providing all the expertise to correctly size and safely wire your generator. Fuel supply of propane or natural gas to the generator is supplied by your gas company. Larger commercial generators are also available in diesel models.

Residential or hobby farm installations are commonly a 12 kW or 20 kW generator. The cost for a residential generator plus installation is usually \$5,800 to \$8,500, depending upon size and wiring required. Contact McLeod Co-op Power for details at 1-800-494-6272. The Co-op can provide you with a price quote.

Thanks to everyone who made the Twins Baseball Clinic a success!



Sixty youth from the area participated in the Playball Minnesota youth baseball clinic at the Arlington ball park on Saturday, July 14. The event was hosted locally by the Arlington Baseball Association and McLeod Co-op Power, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative. The Twins clinics are sponsored by the Twins Community Fund and Great River Energy. A special thanks goes to the volunteers from the Arlington Baseball Association who helped with registration and on-the-field events. Water for the

event (which was really needed in the July heat) was generously donated by Locher Bros. Distributing of Green Isle.

The boys and girls, in groups of 6-9 year-olds and 10-13 year-olds, received coaching on their hitting, throwing and catching skills from members of the Minnesota Twins organization. Under the hot summer sun, with parents and grandparents watching, the youth worked on their skills and had a lot of fun.



More photos on the Co-op's Facebook site.

New learning center open in Buffalo Lake *Project received economic development funds from the Co-op*

Little Stangs Learning Center in Buffalo Lake opened its doors in June as a solution to the daycare shortage in the Renville County community and surrounding towns. The name "Little Stangs" was selected in a naming contest. The facility is operated by the Buffalo Lake Hector Stewart school district and their mascot is the Mustangs. The facility is appropriately named "Little Stangs Learning Center" after the infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers attending. School age care is also offered before and after school and on non-school days by the district.

The new daycare facility was a \$1,370,000 project. The center was partially financed by CenBank, Buffalo Lake Economic Development Authority, BLHS School District, Renville County EDA, and GAP financing of \$160,000 was provided by McLeod Co-op Power's economic development loan fund. Thanks go to Brad and Susan Krumrey (K&S Millwrights), who donated the land for the center. Many other area organizations, businesses, and individuals also contributed to the project. Grants were also received from Buffalo Lake Healthcare Center, Southwest Initiative Foundation, and others. This creative solution to meet the needs of the families in the area will also give a boost to economic development and traffic in town.



A few of the preschoolers were distracted from their educational learning by the group touring their learning center on open house day July 20.

The hope is that the learning center will help meet the local licensed daycare shortage and help retain students within the school district. The BLHS school district, which will operate the learning center and employ the staff, has invested in the project for sustainability of the district, and also as a direct investment in their current and future

students. The environment and structure of the learning center allows for the opportunity of early intervention of any learning or developmental deficiencies.



Infants have their individual cribs for nap times. There are multiple infant rooms with toys and play areas appropriate for each age group. Toddlers and preschoolers have cots to nap on.

The Buffalo Lake Economic Development Authority has been involved as the building owner, purchasing the facility after it was completed. The BLHS School District has a lease-to-own agreement on the building and property.

The learning center provides a child care and learning environment for children ages six-weeks to preschool age. The facility can serve up to 60 children. It has infant classrooms, toddler rooms for busy activities, a kitchen and lunchroom, and a covered outdoor play area with delightful playground equipment. Preschoolers get an age-appropriate planned curriculum that includes music and movement, science and sensory, math and manipulatives, stories and circle time, art, playtime, outside walks and activities.

Children receive their breakfast, lunch, morning and afternoon snacks following food program guidelines. Transportation is provided for preschool programs at the BLHS Schools. The center is open 5:30 AM to 6:30 PM, depending upon needs of parents/children.

Little Stangs Learning Center is located on Main Street in downtown



The new 6,840 sq. ft. learning center in Buffalo Lake can serve up to 60 students. It received Gap financing from the Co-op's economic development revolving loan fund.



Youngsters have a variety of playground equipment that is outdoors but under a roof. They are protected from the sun and rain and snow but can enjoy the fresh air and get outside while using the creative play equipment.

Buffalo Lake. The facility will be able to utilize the Buffalo Lake Community Center for large motor skills when the children cannot be outdoors. In return, users of the Community Center next door can access handicapped bathrooms and kitchen space at the learning center.

Learning Center Director Lori (Rath) Holtberg reported, "At this time we have a total staff of 10 employees, some full-time and some part-time." She added, "Our goal is to have 30 children enrolled by September 2018 and be at the capacity of 60 children within two years."

McLeod Co-op Power was pleased its economic development loan funds could help generate jobs, traffic to the city, and solve daycare problems for families with children.