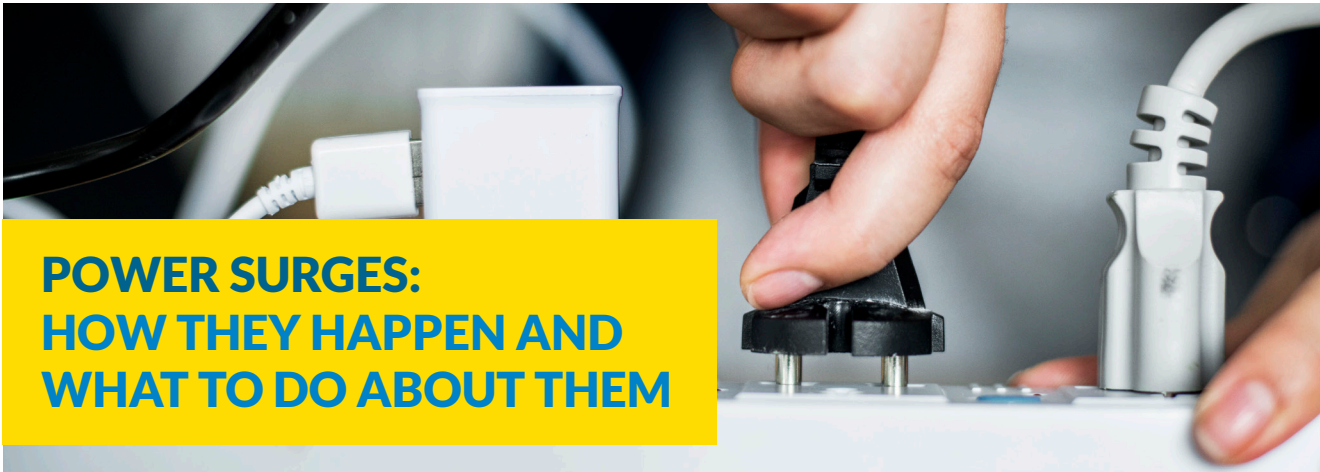


# MCLEOD COOPERATIVE POWER

# NEWS

JANUARY 2022



## POWER SURGES: HOW THEY HAPPEN AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM

Although it takes only a split second for a power surge to occur, this massive spike in electricity can wreak havoc – damaging electronic devices, appliances and electric outlets in a home. Since we get many service requests relating to power surges, we wanted to share some helpful information on this topic. Of course, it isn't always possible to prevent a power surge. Some causes, such as power outages and weather, are impossible to control. However, by being prepared it is often possible to minimize power surge damage.

### WHAT CAUSES POWER SURGES?

Power surges are just as the name suggests: surges of electrical power that are higher than normal. There are several causes for a power surge including the following:

- **Electrical Overload.** Electrical overloads can occur when too much power is drawn from a single circuit. This happens most commonly from overusing extension cords and plugging in too many devices into the same circuit.
- **Faulty Wiring.** Faulty wiring is a potential internal cause of power surges, which are more likely to happen with damaged or exposed electrical wires. It may not be easy to see faulty wiring, especially if it's located behind walls. However, there are other signs that faulty wiring is present. These signs include outlets with burn marks, a burning smell coming from wiring or outlets, a buzzing sound coming from outlets, and circuit breakers frequently tripping. If you see these signs, unplug any connected electrical devices immediately and turn off electricity to the area if possible. It's best to contact a certified electrician if you suspect faulty wiring.
- **Lightning Strike.** Lightning damage usually results from a direct strike on power lines, which produces a large voltage. This creates a spike in voltage, which in turn causes a significant power surge.
- **Power Outage.** While the lack of electricity during a power outage doesn't usually cause any

issues, the return to connection often can. It's common to experience a sudden jump in current when power is restored.

### HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOUR HOME AGAINST POWER SURGES?

There is no way to predict or prevent every power surge but the following suggestions can be helpful to mitigate damage to home appliances and electronics:

- **Unplug everything during a storm.** This may be the single best way to protect your home appliances, computers and smaller electronic devices like gaming systems.
- **Use appliance-grade surge protectors for sensitive electronics.** Surge protectors with a high joule rating (2000+ joules) can help protect critical appliances in the event of a power surge. Consider purchasing appliance-grade surge protectors for your home's computer, refrigerator, washer and dryer, air conditioning unit or home theater system.
- **Have an electrician evaluate your wiring.** If you live in an older home, it is worth having a licensed electrician evaluate your wiring. Old, outdated wiring can fall into disrepair and may cause surges. Even with newer homes, it can be helpful to have an experienced electrician "audit" your wiring to identify any potential future issues.
- **Beware of the post-outage surge.** One minute, all the lights are out and then suddenly the electrical system experiences a large jolt of electricity as everything powers back up. If you find yourself in the middle of an outage, power down all electronics and unplug everything.
- **Distribute your appliances.** Since electrical outlets, extension cords and even power strips can easily become overburdened, it is wise to distribute appliances between outlets and surge protectors. For example, use dedicated surge protectors and outlets for the television and computer, rather than combining them. Distributing where appliances are plugged in can help prevent outlets from becoming overburdened.

OPERATIONS MANAGER  
DAN SCHADE RETIRES

03

WHO OWNS WHAT  
ELECTRIC EQUIPMENT

04

## CONNECT WITH YOUR CO-OP ONLINE



**FACEBOOK**  
Efficiency tips, photos from the field, outage information, and more updated regularly.



**CO-OP WEBSITE**  
All the Co-op's information, news, and resources at your finger tips 24-7.



**SMARTHUB**  
Easy account access online. Pay your bill, check your usage, report outages and more.

## 2022 REBATES

### ENERGY STAR APPLIANCES

Energy Star Dehumidifier \$25

Energy Star Electric Clothes Dryer \$25

### RECYCLING

Old Freezer or Refrigerator \$25  
(Proof of recycling required, limit of two per year.)

### ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Level II EV Charging Station \$500  
(Level 2 charger installed on the co-op's Storage/Off Peak Program)

### WATER HEATERS

Heat Pump Water Heater \$500  
(50-gallon minimum capacity)

Replacement Electric Water Heater \$50  
(40-gallon minimum capacity)

Electric Storage Water Heating Program \$400

### ENERGY STAR SWIMMING POOL

Air Source Heat Pump Pool Heater \$400

Variable Speed Pump \$200

### ENERGY STAR LIGHTING

Energy Star LED Yard Light \$60

### HVAC

Wifi Thermostat \$25

Central Air Conditioner or Air Source Heat Pump Tune-up \$25

Electric Thermal Storage Space Heating \$50 per kW

Air Source Heat Pump 8.2-8.99 HSPF \$400

Air Source Heat Pump ≥ 9.0 HSPF \$1,000

Ductless Air Source Heat Pump \$300

Ground Source Heat Pump \$400 per ton

ECM \$50  
(retrofit only, no new construction)

**Maximum Annual Rebate Amount**  
The maximum annual rebate amount per member is \$5,000. All rebates are on a first-come, first-serve basis while rebate funds remain available.





LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

Budget Season! It was that time of year again where the MCPA Staff takes a deep dive into what they forecast the next year to be financially including what projects are expected to be completed. As one would expect, the budget was developed with the primary source of revenue coming from providing reliable energy to our membership. Other key factors were also the changing material costs, labor costs, operational goals and meeting all debt covenants by our lenders.

MCPA will be entering its first year of the next four-year work plan. We have budgeted to invest \$2.7 million in electrical system improvements. Besides the normal maintenance and replacements of distribution lines and equipment, this next year we are planning to replace 9.6 miles of overhead line with underground cable. These conversions account for 40% of the budgeted amount for system improvements.

If you attended the annual meeting back in July 2021, you might remember we showed a graph of the kilowatt hours sold and that for the past five years, the cooperative has not seen any significant increases in growth. This trend was again assumed as we're forecasting the projected revenue to decrease slightly in 2022 compared to 2021. Using an average allowed us to take out the significant energy sales that the cooperative experienced this past February from the polar vortex as well as the extremely hot weather that started in May. As a result, the budget did account for a decrease of 3.22% in the purchase power from Great River Energy. This is a good time to remind readers that our purchase power expense accounts for 63% of the cooperatives cost of electric expenses.



MANAGER OF FINANCE  
STEPH JAKEL

The MCPA Staff realized that with the decrease in sales each department needed to be conservative with all other operations and maintenance costs. These expenses are expected to only increase by less than 1% in the next year. Savings were found with budgeted interest expense decreasing by almost 10% due to the planning of borrowing less in 2022 and from paying off large interest rate loans and refinancing another at a lower rate in 2021.

At the November board meeting, the board of directors approved the 2022 capital work plan and budget. Management Staff and the board of directors are aware of potential challenges that 2022 could bring to the cooperative with delayed material arrivals, increased material costs and flat electric sales. In previous newsletter articles you have read that we are planning on doing a cost of service study in the upcoming year which will help the cooperative identify if we need to take any proactive measurements to help us maintain a healthy financial footing, while providing the most affordable electricity as possible.

Cooperatively,

*Steph Jakel*

DECEMBER 2021  
BOARD MEETING  
HIGHLIGHTS

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of McLeod Cooperative Power Association was held on December 21, 2021, at McLeod Co-op headquarters. All nine board members, the attorney, CEO Ron Meier, and department managers participated in the meeting.

Highlights of the meeting included:

- The November outage report was reviewed with a total of 57 outages, affecting 123 consumers. Furthermore, it was reported that ten poles snapped during the recent windstorm on Dec. 16 resulting in three crews being out most of the night restoring power.
- Operations Manager Schade gave the monthly Operations Report. The underground contractor has finished installing 3 phase underground for the capital projects in Hale, Rich Valley, Hutchinson, Glencoe, and Sumter Townships. The line crews are retiring overhead lines and switching accounts to underground.
- Great River Energy has announced that the residential rebates will not be changing for 2022.
- Steph Jakel, Finance Manager gave the monthly financial report with the November 2021 Operating Statement and Balance Sheet being presented.
- CEO Meier thanked Operations Manager Schade for his 43 years of dedicated service to the cooperative and wished him all the best in retirement.
- A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve Policy 1-2 Organizational Chart.
- A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve CEO Ron Meier as Voting Delegate and President Doug Kirtz as Alternate Voting Delegate for NRTC 2022 Annual Meeting.



Verify your visitors.



One in four homeowners has had a package stolen.

SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING ON YOUR DOORSTEP.



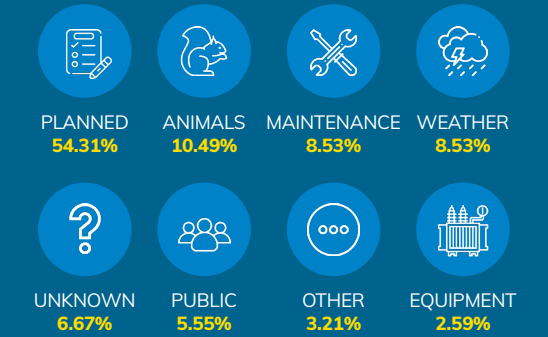
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2021  
POWER OUTAGES

MONTH	OUTAGES	MEMBERS	AVG. MINUTES
January	45	89	51.24
February	47	154	30.41
March	67	1,050	50.08
April	74	152	81.07
May	53	223	82.28
June	78	1,185	94.26
July	77	406	130.28
August	107	414	123.27
September	75	210	90.55
October	81	270	89.07
November	57	123	59.25
December	48	381	147.31

WHAT'S CAUSING OUTAGES?





# STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs).

Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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# ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Maximize your heating system's performance by inspecting, cleaning or replacing air filters once a month or as needed to reduce energy costs and prevent potential damage to your system. Make sure radiators, baseboard heaters and warm-air registers aren't blocked so air can flow freely.

# DAN SCHADE RETIRES AFTER 43 YEAR CAREER

*Long time McLeod Co-op Power employee, Dad Schade, officially retires February 22, 2022, closing out a successful career that has spanned more than four decades at the co-op. While Dan will certainly be missed by many, co-workers and friends celebrate his success and joyfully wish him well in his golden years.*

Dan began his career at McLeod Co-op power as summer help in his senior year of high school. Over the course of his 43-year career here, Dan worked his way through the ranks from apprentice, journeyman, line foreman, line superintendent, to his current role as Operations Manager.

"There have been so many great memories here. My first big milestone was passing the journeyman's test. That felt like such an accomplishment after a lot of hard work," shared Dan. "Restoring power after large storms easily hits the highlight reel as well. I've spent many hours working post storm in our own service territory, but it was always extra gratifying to help others. I remember going west to help West River Co-op in South Dakota vividly, and I've helped many other co-ops through my years as well, such as Benco, Connexus, PKM, Meeker, Brown County, Freeborn-Mower, Peoples and Steele-Waseca." Dan also shared that it was his honor to work with our former CEO Carrie Buckley, the Board of Directors and the building committee. "It was really fun to work with the committee that made our new facility a reality and the new space has been so nice to work in the last years of my career," said Dan.

43 years at one company is something you don't hear about that often anymore and it's safe to say that Dan witnessed a lot of change during his tenure. When asked



about it, Dan recalled, "The staffing changes alone in 43 years have been tremendous. I've worked with six different CEOs, three line superintendents, 14 foremen, and 25 linemen. And those changes don't even come close to the changes in technology and the way the world uses electricity."

Dan also mentioned that the Board of Directors has changed over a number of times in his tenure and every board was great to work with, especially when it came to approving the purchase of equipment that is needed to do the job safely and efficiently. "A big part of my role at the Co-op, was to keep the team and the public safe which is something I really cared about. I'm really going to miss working with the members, directors, and the operations crew," said Dan.

While Dan said he'll miss the people and the good feeling after restoring power during storms there are a few things he's not going to miss - the long workdays and not being on call 24 hours a day. "I'm looking forward to more free time to build a new home by the lake, fishing and traveling with my wife, and spending time with family and our grandchildren."

*"On behalf of the Co-op, I'd like to express our sincere gratitude for the dedication that Dan Schade has provided our cooperative. Dan worked his entire career with our cooperative providing more than four decades of service to our members. His vast experience and enthusiasm for our Cooperative will be greatly missed. We are grateful for all Dan's hard work and devotion to our Co-op and its members and wish him the best in his retirement." – Ron Meier, CEO*

# PEOPLE BEHIND YOUR POWER

# EMERSON BRADY \*NEW\* MANAGER OF OPERATIONS



Emerson Brady recently joined the McLeod Co-op Power team to take responsibility for the Operations Department. Emerson joins us after working as a lineman for the City of Chaska for nearly 20 years, where he began his career straight out of line school. He's excited to join a cooperative because he wanted to return to his rural roots having grown up a farm kid in southern Minnesota and felt like the opportunity at McLeod was a good fit for his young family. After many years in the field, Emerson is excited to see an organization from the management's perspective and work together with others to do great things for the areas we serve. "There's a great deal of the electrical field I enjoy; however, the satisfaction of completing the large jobs where the team needs to use their brains and ability are what I enjoy and look forward to the most about the job," shared Emerson.

**Fun Facts:** Emerson and his wife Lacey have 2 children, Easton (8), and Hadley (5). They enjoy time together on their rural property. Some of Emerson's favorite hobbies include hunting and fishing. He enjoys hunting whitetail deer and pheasants, as well as predators like coyote and fox. He fishes for panfish in the summer but when the water freezes, he's targeting northern pike by spear.



