



## MCLEOD CO-OP POWER DISTRIBUTES \$52,100 IN OPERATION ROUND UP FUNDS

Through Operation Round Up, members donate pennies each month by volunteering to have their electric bills rounded up. **In March 2024, the Cooperative and Operation Round Up® contributed \$52,100 to 25 area organizations.** (See the complete list on page 2.)

Operation Round Up is offered by hundreds of electric cooperatives across the United States. The program has raised millions of dollars for various charitable organizations and community projects, such as food banks, health clinics, and educational programs. Here at McLeod Co-op alone, the Operation

Round Up program has distributed over \$149,000 to local organizations since the program's inception in 2004.

One of the benefits of Operation Round Up is that it allows members to make a positive impact on their community with just a small contribution. The extra change from each member's bill may not seem like much, but when combined with the contributions of other members, it can add up to a significant amount of money that can make a real difference in people's lives.

*Continued in page 2.*

### NOMINATIONS BY PETITION FOR DIRECTOR CANDIDACY DEADLINE

Cooperative members residing in Districts 4, 5 and 6 may petition to have their name added to the slate of candidates for the 2024 director election in their district. To have another name on the ballot, in addition to the two candidate names selected by the nominating committee, you may file a nomination by petition. The petition form can be found online or by contacting our office. The petition must be signed by 20 or more McLeod Co-op Power electric members residing in your district. The last day that a petition can be submitted is June 1, 2024.

### LOAD MANAGEMENT PARTICIPANT NOTICE:

McLeod Co-op Power will be replacing radio receivers in Collins and Acoma Townships over the next couple of weeks. These are the receivers that are utilized as part of load control events. They are being replaced with models that integrate with our new load control system at no cost to our members. We appreciate everyone's assistance as we move ahead with the replacement process. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the us at (800) 494-6272.

## 2024 GRANT RECIPIENTS

Buffalo Lake Ambulance	\$2,500
Buffalo Lake Fire Department	\$2,500
Ecumen RSVP	\$1,000
Gaylord Fire Department	\$2,500
GFW Dollars for Scholars	\$1,000
Green Isle Fire & Rescue	\$2,500
GSL Jr. High STEM Trip	\$1,000
Hector Ambulance Service	\$2,500
Hector Historical Center	\$2,000
Hector Volunteer Fire Department	\$2,500
Immanuel Grace Lutheran School	\$1,000
Lutheran Social Service of MN/LSS Meals Winsted Meal Site	\$1,600
Mayer Fire Department	\$2,500
McLeod County Sheriff's Office – K9 Unit	\$2,500
McLeod Food Shelf	\$2,500
New Germany Fire Department	\$2,500
New Germany Legion Post 601	\$2,500
Renville County Back the Pack Program	\$3,000
Sibley County FoodShare, Inc.	\$2,000
Sibley East Middle School/High School	\$1,500
Silver Lake Pools and Parks Organization	\$2,000
Southwest Carver County Food Shelf	\$2,000
Stewart Fire Department	\$2,500
SWWC Foundation for Innovation in Education	\$1,000
Westphal Retrievers K9 Helpers	\$3,000

## ORU CONTINUED...

Operation Round Up also allows McLeod Co-op to give back to the communities we serve in a meaningful way. As a not-for-profit organization, McLeod Co-op is committed to improving the quality of life of our members. Operation Round Up is one way that we can fulfill this commitment by supporting local organizations and initiatives.

“While we can calculate how many dollars have been granted through Operation Round Up, there’s no way for us to know the total number of lives that have been positively affected,” said Bob Thomes, Assistant Member Services Manager. “It’s just a few cents each month for our members, but that ‘small change’ adds up to make a huge impact. The generosity of our members and employees has created a ripple effect that has spread across our area in immeasurable ways.”



**SATURDAY, JULY 20 / ARLINGTON, MN**  
**OPEN TO EVERYONE, AGES 6-12!**

### FIELD:

Arlington Baseball Park  
 410 2nd Ave NE  
 Arlington, MN 55307

### HOST:

McLeod Cooperative  
 Power Association &  
 Arlington Baseball Association

### TIME:

1:00 - 3:00 PM

### REGISTER:

PLAYBALLMN.COM



## CEO MESSAGE

A few days ago, I had a very pleasant conversation with one of our members. While the topic of the conversation was not easy, especially for our members on a fixed income, it was good to sit down and discuss the various aspects of the electric bill that we all see. At the beginning of the year, we had our first general rate increase in many years. This included an increase to our system delivery charge on the bill and that was the concern the member had.

Traditionally we have two types of charges to recovery costs from our members, an energy charge, and the system delivery charge. Prior to our new metering system, we were only able to measure the electrical energy being consumed; kilo-watt hours.

The challenge we have when we start to consider the costs to keep our cooperative running, the consumption of electricity is only one of the costs being incurred. There are costs of just having the power lines and all the supporting equipment available regardless of if we are using a lot or a little electricity. Of course, if our membership is using less electricity due to warmer weather, we see our purchase power costs going down, but we don't see other costs changing.

The system delivery charge is there to recover those costs that are basically the same month after month. For example, as we build and continue to invest in the electrical system, we take out loans. We have loan payments every month to our bankers no matter how much electricity is used by our members. This is just one of many costs that we all must cover.

So how do we figure out what the system delivery charge should be? That can be a tricky part. From time to time, we do what we call a cost-of-service study to help find an answer to that question. The study looks at all the costs and determines how those costs are being created by different types of electrical users. A farmhouse



**CEO RON MEIER**

uses electricity differently than a commercial member. Larger members require larger electrical lines than smaller customers. This is why we have more than eight different rates.

These studies take a few months to complete. It dives into how the electrical system is built, member usage patterns, and of course a very detailed breakdown of our financials. There is a lot of information that goes into the study.

We just embarked on a new cost-of-service study last month. We selected a firm to help with this effort. In a few months we will have a new study that will help inform us on how to design rates. It will suggest where our system delivery charge should be set in relationship to our energy charge.

One of my favorite things I get to do from time to time is to visit with our members to hear about their concerns. The conversation I had recently reinforced all of our concerns about how rates are set, and it is why we need to be mindful.

### Cooperatively

R1PL



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FACEBOOK**

[www.facebook.com/McLeodCoop/](http://www.facebook.com/McLeodCoop/)

## APRIL 2024 BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of McLeod Cooperative Power Association was held on April 30, 2024, at McLeod Co-op headquarters. The nine board members, attorney, CEO Ron Meier, and department managers participated in the meeting.

Highlights of the meeting included:

- The outage report for March 2024 was reviewed with a total of 50 outages, affecting 58 consumers.
- Operations Manager Brady reported that the new Bell substation will be energized on April 30th.
- TreeStory has completed 90% of the vegetation management work in Hale Township and plan to be working in Winsted Township next.
- A motion was carried to approve Policy 4-12A & B Line Extension and Line Extension Schedule of Charges.
- A motion was carried to approve the Notice of Annual Meeting.
- Luke Greden, from CliftonLarsonAllan, presented the audited financials for 2023, which received a clean audit opinion.
- Manager of Finance Jakel reviewed the March financials.
- A motion was carried to approve Director Randy Hlavka to serve a one-year term on the Great River Energy board.

## ELECTRIC SAFETY: MUST-KNOW TIPS

Each year, over 30,000 non-fatal electrical shock incidents and 600 to 1,000 electrocution deaths are reported. To steer clear of these alarming statistics, heed these tips from McLeod Co-op Power:



**Electrical Outlets:** Ensure plugs fit snugly to prevent shocks or fires. Replace missing or damaged wall plates, especially with young children around.

**Plugs:** Never force plugs into outlets and avoid overloading them with adapters or multiple plugs.

**Cords:** Check cords for damage, avoiding placement under carpets or in high-traffic areas. Never secure cords with nails or staples. Reserve extension cords for temporary use.

**Light Bulbs:** Match bulb wattage to fixture requirements and ensure secure installation to prevent overheating.

**GFCIs:** Install Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters in key areas and test them monthly.

**Appliances/Electronics:** Address issues like blown fuses, tripped breakers, or shocks immediately. Use surge protectors for electronics.

**Electrical Wiring:** Regularly inspect for loose receptacles, wires, or fixtures. Attend to any signs of electrical malfunction promptly. Following these precautions can significantly reduce the risk of electrical accidents.

## MCLEOD COUNTY UNITED WAY WINS MINNESOTA TOUCHSTONE ENERGY COMMUNITY AWARD

*United Way of McLeod County was honored with the 2024 Minnesota Touchstone Energy Community Award during the Minnesota Rural Electric Association's Annual Meeting on March 20. Nominated by McLeod Co-op Power, this recognition celebrates local non-profits or community groups making a positive impact within their service territory.*

"This annual award was established to recognize organizations with a strong commitment to the local community, similar values to those of Minnesota's Touchstone Energy cooperatives," Joe Miller, a Minnesota Touchstone Energy representative, said. United Way of McLeod County stood out for its youth activity scholarship program, providing financial assistance to deserving young individuals. This program ensures access to educational and extracurricular activities, including sports leagues, art classes, music lessons, scouting programs, leadership workshops, and STEM-related educational programs.

The scholarships ensure that deserving youth in McLeod County can engage in activities that will positively impact their lives. The initiative invests in the transformative power of sports, art, and music to nurture the talents and character of area youth. These diverse experiences enrich their lives and foster a sense of belonging and purpose.

"It means so much to our community of youth who want to participate in any activity," Debra Siemsen of McLeod County United Way said. "This past year we provided more than 130 students with scholarships totaling more than \$10,000. Thank you so much for this award. The funds will be a great benefit to our scholarship program"

Last fall, Touchstone Energy cooperatives throughout the state presented local awards to individuals or organizations for outstanding contributions to their communities. Local award recipients were automatically entered for the statewide recognition. "Minnesota is blessed with many individual, group and corporate citizens willing to donate time and effort to better our communities," said Ron Meier, CEO for McLeod Co-op. "As Touchstone Energy cooperatives, we are pleased to recognize those who impact our community in so many positive ways."



(L-R) Ron Meier, CEO McLeod Co-op Power; Debra Siemsen, Executive Director United Way of McLeod County; Yodee Rivera, Board Member United Way of McLeod County, and Susan Anderson, Board Member McLeod Co-op Power.

# POWERING THROUGH: YOUR GUIDE TO SPRING AND SUMMER OUTAGES



At McLeod Co-op Power, our commitment is to deliver electricity reliably and consistently to our members. Despite our best efforts, spring and summer storms can sometimes lead to unavoidable outages. During these times, our dedicated crews spring into action to swiftly and safely restore power.

As spring arrives, it's a great time to revisit what to do in the event of a power outage. We urge our members to proactively plan for potential outages, ensuring they have necessary supplies and are familiar with outage procedures. This preparation can help minimize inconvenience and ensure safety during unexpected disruptions.

- **UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION:** Ensure your phone number and email address on file with McLeod Co-op are current.
- **STAY INFORMED:** Monitor weather forecasts to anticipate potential outages.
- **STOCK UP ON ESSENTIALS:** Keep a supply of non-perishable food, bottled water, and necessary medications on hand. Also, consider having a battery-powered or hand-cranked radio for updates and communication.
- **CREATE AN EMERGENCY KIT:** Assemble a kit with flashlights, batteries, candles, matches, and a first-aid kit. Don't forget to include a portable phone charger to keep your devices powered for communication.
- **HAVE BACKUP POWER SOURCES:** Invest in a generator to provide temporary power during outages. Ensure it's properly maintained and safely connected to prevent accidents.
- **PROTECT ELECTRONIC DEVICES:** Safeguard sensitive electronics like computers and TVs with surge protectors or unplugging them to prevent damage from power surges when the electricity comes back on.

## WHAT TO DO IF THE LIGHTS GO OUT

### ASSESS THE SITUATION

- Do you have power at some locations in your home? If so, the problem is likely a fuse or breaker. This may be a warning of overloaded wiring, a short in the wiring or a defective appliance.
- Do your neighbors have power? Whether or not your neighbors have power can help us determine if it is an isolated outage or something larger.

- Can you see anything outside your home that might have caused an outage? If you see anything like sparks, trees down in the area, a car in the ditch, a construction crew digging or anything suspicious that may have caused the problem, it is important for members to let McLeod Co-op know. This information can be helpful.

### REPORT YOUR OUTAGE

- Use the SmartHub App or call us at (800) 927-5685 to report your power outage.
- Once you've reported your outage, follow us on social media! We often post information during a major outage on our Facebook page.

We always appreciate your patience while crews work diligently and safely during power outages. Once we know about your outage, crews will be dispatched immediately so your power can be restored as quickly as possible. There is no way to know how long an outage will take to restore, so please remember that McLeod Co-op will do everything we can to get your power restored as fast as possible.



## NO POWER? NO WORRIES

When a power outage occurs, a Briggs & Stratton standby generator is designed for what matters most, your total peace of mind.

Protect your home and family from the expense and inconvenience caused by power outages.

**Call (800) 494-6272 for more info!**

# PLANT TREES SAFELY

Know what and where you're planting. When making landscaping decisions, it's important to consider the type of care, appearance, location, and overall size (mature height) of trees and shrubs before planting – especially when planting near power lines. Follow these safe planting distances to help us avoid future problems and power outages and don't forget to call 811 before you dig to locate buried utility lines.

## LOW TREE ZONE

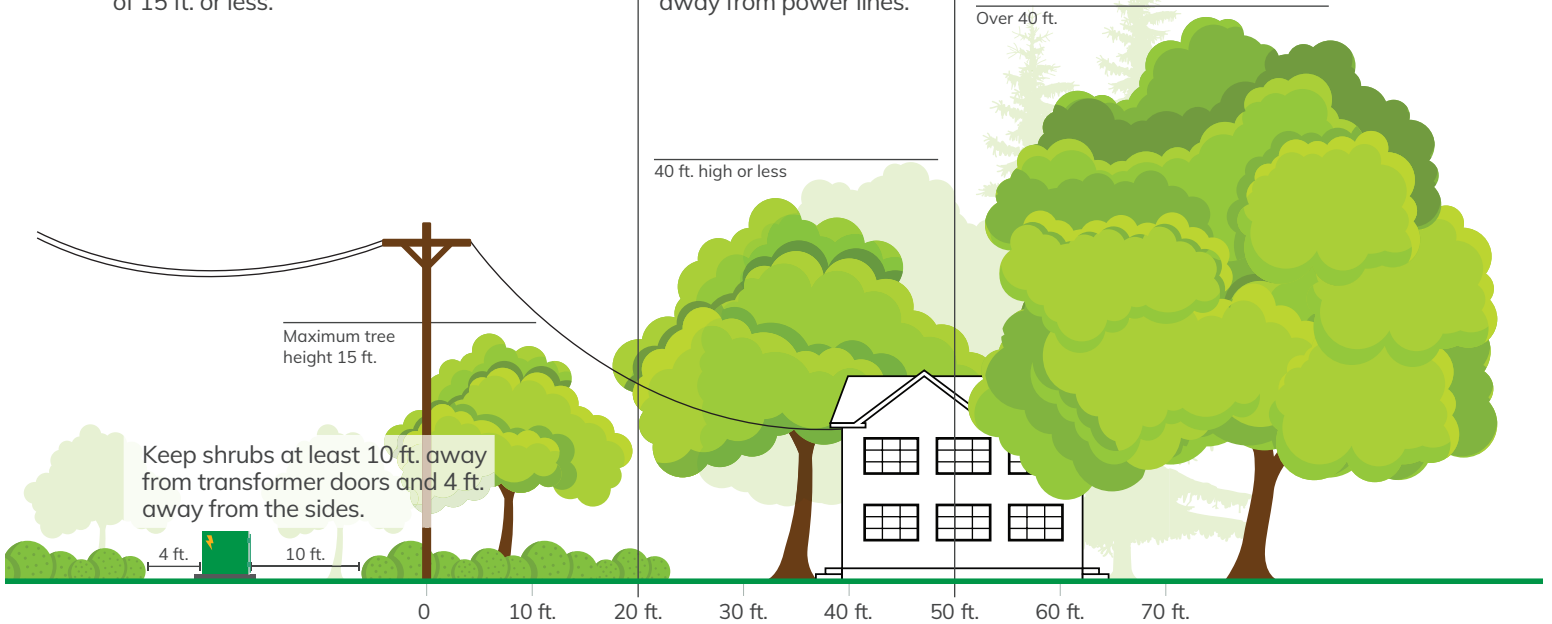
Avoid planting within 20 ft. of power lines. If planting is unavoidable, only plant shrubs and small trees that reach a mature height of 15 ft. or less.

## MEDIUM TREE ZONE

Plant medium trees (under 40 ft. when mature) at least 25 ft. away from power lines.

## LARGE TREE ZONE

Plant large trees (over 40 ft. when mature) at least 50 ft. away from power lines.



## KEEP COOL AND TUNE UP YOUR AIR CONDITIONER



**McLeod Cooperative Power members are eligible for a \$25 rebate when an HVAC contractor performs a central air conditioning tune-up.**

Clogged coils, low refrigerant levels, plugged drain lines and a host of minor problems can greatly affect the efficiency of your air conditioner, driving up power bills.

A well tuned system will:

- Lower utility bills by 5-25%.
- Extend equipment life.
- Provide peace of mind for your family.
- Fewer repairs and improved system reliability.
- Increase cooling capacity.

**Learn more at:**

[www.mcleodcoop.com/products/rebates/](http://www.mcleodcoop.com/products/rebates/)

## BENEFITS OF AN A/C TUNE UP



INCREASE EFFICIENCY



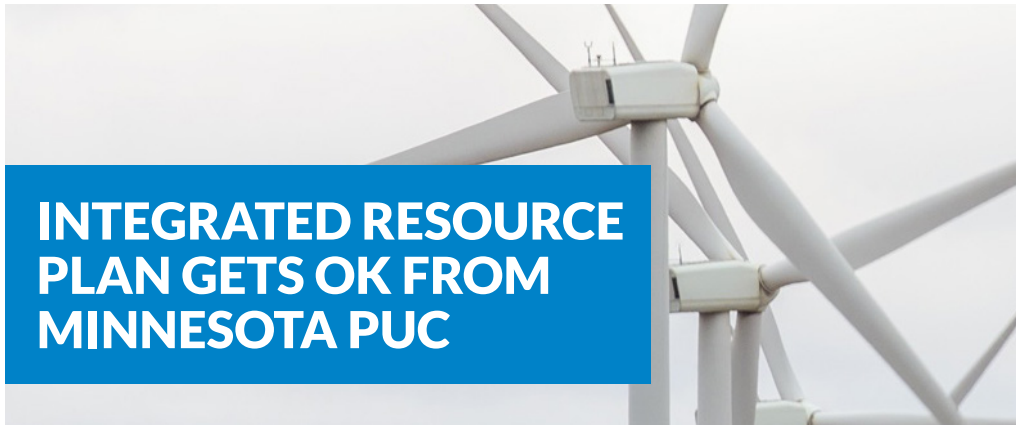
SAVE MONEY



EXTEND LIFE OF A/C UNIT



LOWER HUMIDITY



## INTEGRATED RESOURCE PLAN GETS OK FROM MINNESOTA PUC

**The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) gave the green light to Great River Energy's integrated resource plan (IRP), which outlines the cooperative's 2023-37 generation portfolio investments.**

The plan is aimed at maintaining costs for Great River Energy's 27 member-owners while significantly increasing the amount of renewable energy. It was unanimously accepted by the commission on March 7 after being submitted more than a year ago.

IRPs serve as strategic roadmaps for utilities, outlining their anticipated electricity generation methods over the next 15 years, with the PUC providing advisory guidance.

Under the accepted IRP, Great River Energy plans to procure or construct more than 1,200 megawatts (MW) of wind power, 200 MW of energy storage and 200 MW of solar energy capacity by 2037. With this trajectory, the cooperative is poised to achieve its 30% carbon-free objective by 2025, with an expected 90% reduction in carbon emissions by 2035 compared to 2005 levels.

Commissioner Joseph Sullivan commended Great River Energy's efforts and the outcomes contained in the IRP.

"When you look at the high levels, the numbers are quite impressive," he said. "You're going to be reducing carbon emissions by 90% by 2031. If everybody were reducing their carbon emission by 90% by 2031, I would feel a lot better about where the world is going."

Commissioner John Tuma also praised Great River Energy and its efforts during the IRP process.

"I really appreciate the outreach you did compared to previous IRPs I've seen," Tuma said. "There was a lot of good outreach to your members, the general public and stakeholders. It was a good piece of work."

The PUC asked Great River Energy to submit its next IRP by April 1, 2026, with an interim update scheduled for 2025. The update will cover expanding solar resources, electric vehicle adoption rates and updated carbon pricing models.

### OFFICE PHONE

(320) 864-3148  
(800) 494-6272

### 24-HOUR OUTAGE PHONE

(800) 927-5685

### WEBSITE

[www.mcleodcoop.com](http://www.mcleodcoop.com)

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**McLeod Cooperative Power is an equal opportunity employer and provider.**



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Looking for an easy way to manage home energy use? Smart plugs are inexpensive and offer convenient solutions for scheduling and controlling your favorite electronic devices. With smart plugs, you can easily manage your coffee maker, lighting, home office equipment, video game consoles and more. Smart plugs can help you manage devices through a smart phone app, your home assistant or voice control. By conveniently powering off or scheduling devices, you can save energy (and money!).



USPS 2220  
**PERIODICALS**  
**POSTAGE PAID**  
HUTCHINSON, MN

3515 11th St. East  
Glencoe, MN 55336

[WWW.MCLEODCOOP.COM](http://WWW.MCLEODCOOP.COM)

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## MCLEOD CO-OP POWER AT A GLANCE

We are proud to have served the area since 1935. McLeod Cooperative Power is a member-owned cooperative that provides electricity to more than 6,000 residents, businesses, and farms in McLeod, Renville, Sibley and Carver Counties.



### MISSION:

To enhance the quality of life for our members through effective, safe, and innovative solutions.


 **6,994**  
MEMBER  
CONSUMERS



FOUNDED  
**1935**

**NINE**  
MEMBER-ELECTED  
DIRECTORS

**3.4**  
MEMBERS  
PER MILE  
OF LINE

 **2.040**  
MILES OF LINE  
(1,456 OVERHEAD,  
584 UNDERGROUND)

SMARTHUB USERS

**1,443**



### VISION:

Exceed members' expectations for reliable energy and services.



### 7 COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

1. Open and Voluntary Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Members' Economic Participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training and Information
6. Cooperation among Cooperatives
7. Concern for Community

 **965+**  
SQUARE MILE  
SERVICE AREA



**ELECTRIC REVENUE**  
\$21.8 MILLION

OPERATING EXPENSE  
**\$22.3 MILLION**

COST OF POWER  
**\$13.6 MILLION**



**NET MARGINS**  
\$799 THOUSAND



**TWENTY SIX**  
DEDICATED AND TALENTED  
EMPLOYEES

.....  
**GLENCOE**  
**HEADQUARTERS**  
.....

CAPITAL CREDITS  
**\$205K**  


**KWHS SOLD**  
**525,485,932**

