

SECURING OUR ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE: SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING

Electric infrastructure, including substations, powerlines, and transformers, is critical to keeping the lights on and powering our communities. However, these vital systems can be vulnerable to damage or tampering. That's why McLeod Co-op Power is calling on our members to be vigilant and help safeguard our energy grid.

WHY IT MATTERS

Damage to electrical infrastructure can lead to power outages, increased costs, and safety hazards. Ensuring the security of these systems is not just the responsibility of utility employees; it's a community effort. By staying alert and aware, you can play an essential role in protecting our shared resources.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

When you're near powerlines, substations, or other equipment, keep an eye out for anything unusual or suspicious, such as:

- People or vehicles lingering near infrastructure without a clear purpose.
- Signs of tampering, such as cut fences or open panels.
- Unauthorized drones flying near substations or powerlines.

- Suspicious objects, such as packages, tools, or equipment left near infrastructure without explanation.
- Unexpected noises like buzzing, clicking, or alarms near substations or powerlines, which could indicate tampering or malfunction.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

If you see something that doesn't look right, report it immediately. Quick action can prevent potential harm. Contact local law enforcement and notify McLeod Co-op Power at (800) 494-6272. Always prioritize your safety—never confront individuals or attempt to intervene.

STAYING AWARE

Whether walking near infrastructure or driving past, maintaining situational awareness is key. Avoid distractions like cell phones and stay mindful of your surroundings so you can easily identify anything that might look suspicious.

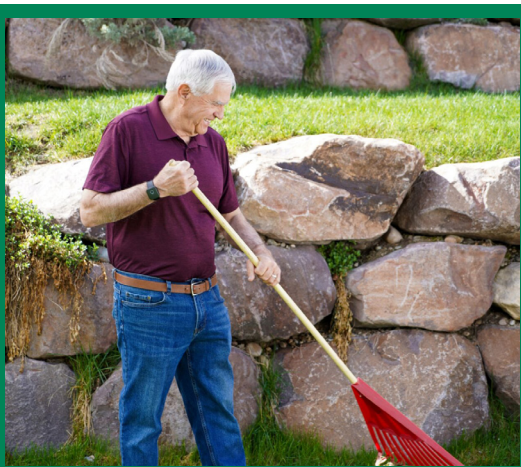
Together, we can protect our community's energy systems. Remember: if you see something, say something. Your vigilance makes a difference in maintaining the safety and reliability of our power supply.

NOTICE TO COGENERATORS

In compliance with McLeod Cooperative Power Association's adopted rules relating to cogeneration and small power production, McLeod Cooperative Power Association is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from cogenerators and small power producers, who satisfy the conditions as a qualifying facility.

McLeod Cooperative Power Association is obligated to provide information free of charge to all interested members upon request regarding rates and interconnection requirements. All interconnections require an application and approval to become a qualifying facility. Details on rates and applications can be found online (www.mcleodcoop.com/services/renewable-energy/) using the Co-op's Nova Power Portal.

Any dispute over interconnections, sales, and purchases is subject to resolution by the McLeod Cooperative Power Association Board. Interested members should contact McLeod Co-op Power, 3515 11th St. East, Glencoe, MN 55336, or call (800) 494-6272.



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TAX REMINDER

As a reminder to our Distributed Energy Resource (DER) members, McLeod Co-op Power will issue 1099 forms to anyone who has received cash payments exceeding \$600 for excess energy within the year.

If you receive a 1099, it is your responsibility to consult a tax advisor to understand the implications of this income and how it may need to be reported on your taxes. Tax treatment can vary based on individual circumstances and the nature of the payments.

If you have any questions regarding the issuance of 1099 forms, feel free to contact our office for assistance. For tax-related inquiries, please consult with a qualified tax professional.



HAPPY RETIREMENT, BOB SENS!

After an incredible 35-year career, Bob Senst is hanging up his hard hat and retiring from McLeod Co-op Power.

Bob began his journey as an apprentice lineworker, spending 15 years in the field maintaining and restoring power to our members. After his years in the field, Bob transitioned to engineering, staking, and metering, where he spent another 15 years. In these roles, he conducted stray voltage investigations and led one of the co-op's largest technological projects: the implementation of the Automated Meter Reading (AMR) system. The shift from phone line and powerline carrier systems to radio-based technology was a monumental effort that modernized operations and improved efficiency across the co-op.

In the last five years, Bob has served as the co-op's Warehouse/Materials Handler, ensuring materials and supplies were ready to support our crews and operations.

Bob has witnessed significant changes over the years, including advancements in technology, improved equipment, and a stronger emphasis on safety. Reflecting on his career, he takes pride in becoming a journeyman lineworker and embracing opportunities to grow and diversify his skills.

Throughout his career, Bob has cherished the camaraderie of teamwork and the shared sense of accomplishment in achieving goals. One of his most vivid memories was working mutual aid during the Halloween Blizzard of 1991, where he spent over a week assisting Steele-Waseca Co-op in restoring power under harsh conditions. Bob also recalls the challenges of severe ice storms and the immense effort they required from the team.

In retirement, Bob plans to travel and explore part-time work in agriculture. While he'll miss the camaraderie and teamwork, he leaves colleagues with wise advice: "Enjoy your work, but don't let it define you. Have fun along the way."

Congratulations, Bob, and best wishes for this exciting new chapter!

MANAGER'S MESSAGE

YOUR EYES, OUR SAFETY: LET'S SPOT HAZARDS TOGETHER

As Minnesota shifts into colder months, with shorter days and unpredictable weather, the safety of our powerlines and equipment remains a shared responsibility. By staying alert and proactive, we can work together to prevent accidents and ensure everyone's well-being.

TREES AND POWERLINES: A DANGEROUS COMBINATION

We love Minnesota's trees—they're beautiful and essential for shielding us from harsh winds. However, when branches grow too close to powerlines, they become a safety hazard.

For example, in Big Lake Township in Central Minnesota, a young man tragically lost his life when his chainsaw came into contact with a powerline while trimming evergreens.

We are always available to inspect any concerning trees near powerlines. If you notice potential hazards, let us know so we can work with you to address them promptly.

FARMING EQUIPMENT AND POWERLINES: SAFETY FIRST

Did harvest season leave you worried as your tractor or equipment barely cleared the powerlines? You're not alone.

In Sand Creek Township in Southern Minnesota, a tragic incident occurred when the auger made contact with the powerlines, resulting in fatalities. Let's work together to ensure equipment clearance is safe before planting season begins. If you're uncertain about line height or need assistance finding solutions, reach out—we're here to help.

FLICKERING LIGHTS: A SIGNAL TO ACT

A flickering outdoor light might seem minor, but it could indicate a larger issue in your home or on your property. Similar situations have led to significant consequences, like the Inland Power fire in Washington, which damaged 240 homes. If you see a concerning light, don't hesitate to contact



STEPH JAKEL

a qualified electrician. You can also report any issues to us if you believe it's an issue with our distribution system. Early action can prevent larger problems.

WINTER DRIVING AND DOWNED POWERLINES

Winter roads bring unique dangers, including black ice and reduced visibility, leading to accidents that sometimes involve powerlines. If you witness a downed powerline, remember these critical safety tips:

- Assume all powerlines are energized.
- Stay in your vehicle unless your safety depends on evacuating due to a vehicle fire.
- If you must exit, jump clear with both feet together, avoiding contact with the vehicle and ground simultaneously. Continue hopping with both feet together until you're in a safe area.

In 2019, a Waseca Sheriff's Deputy was injured after unknowingly touching a live powerline while responding to a crash. Respect electricity and stay cautious in these situations.

TEAMWORK KEEPS US SAFE

Our line crews work year-round to patrol and maintain our system, but we can't catch everything alone. With your eyes on the ground, we can cover more territory and minimize risks. Together, we can reduce accidents and injuries.

We're all part of the same team, and your awareness is invaluable. Thank you for your vigilance and support—let's keep safety a priority, together!

Cooperatively,

DECEMBER 2024 BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of McLeod Cooperative Power Association was held on December 19, 2024, at McLeod Coop headquarters. Eight board members, attorney, CEO Ron Meier, and department managers participated in the meeting.

Highlights of the meeting included:

- The outage report for the month of November 2024 was provided with a total of 44 outages, affecting 75 consumers.
- Operations Manager Brady reported that the line crews have started staking out pole changes from the pole testing that was completed in late October.
- Manager of Finance Jakel reviewed the November financials.
- A motion was carried approving the 2025 budget.
- A motion was carried approving Director Kirk Newman to attend the GRE MMG Meeting on May 7-8, 2025.
- A motion was carried approving Resolution 2024-12-01 Approval of Nextera Energy Resources – Red Butte Wind Energy Purchase.
- A motion was carried approving Resolution 2024-12-02 Vote in Favor of Amendment to Appendix B of the Purchase Power Contract.

ROUNDING UP FOR A BRIGHTER TOMORROW: MCLEOD CO-OP'S OPERATION ROUND UP® PROGRAM



McLeod Co-op Power's Operation Round Up (ORU) program exemplifies how a little generosity can go a long way toward strengthening communities.

Sometimes, it's the smallest actions that create the biggest ripple effects. McLeod Co-op Power's Operation Round Up® program takes spare change and turns it into meaningful change for communities across McLeod, Renville, Carver, and Sibley Counties.

Through this initiative, participating members round up their monthly electric bill to the nearest dollar, donating spare change, ranging from just \$0.01 to \$0.99, to the McLeod Co-op Operation Round Up® Trust.

That small contribution, averaging \$6 per year per participant, adds up to significant funding for non-profit organizations in our service territory. These funds support a wide variety of causes, from youth education programs and emergency services to environmental initiatives and disaster relief efforts. Past beneficiaries include local food shelves, fire departments, school programs, and community projects that improve the quality of life for area residents. Since the program's inception, Operation Round Up® has donated more than \$282,000 to support these vital initiatives in our communities.

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS ENCOURAGED TO APPLY

Organizations dedicated to serving our community are encouraged to apply for funding. Applications are simple to complete and are available online at www.mcleodcoop.com/community/operation-round-up/ or by contacting the co-op office.

The deadline for the next funding cycle is March 1, with grants typically distributed in March or April. This is a great opportunity to secure resources for projects that make a real difference in our region.

CO-OP COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

"At McLeod Co-op Power, we believe in the power of community and the importance of giving back," said Bob Thomes, Assistant Member Services Manager. "Operation Round Up® reflects our cooperative values by helping local organizations thrive and improving the lives of our members and neighbors. It's a program that truly embodies what it means to be part of a cooperative."

Whether you're a participating member or an organization seeking support, Operation Round Up® proves that small contributions can lead to significant change. With every rounded-up bill, we're building a stronger, brighter future - one cent at a time.

McLeod Co-op Power's Operation Round Up® is an opt-out program. Residential accounts are automatically enrolled, and electric bills are rounded up to the nearest dollar unless the account has been opted out. If you would like to opt out of the program and haven't yet done so, please call (800) 494-6272 or complete the form available at www.mcleodcoop.com/services/operation-round-up/.



HAPPY NEW YEAR! GET YOUR CALENDAR

McLeod Cooperative Power 2025 calendars are now available featuring scenic landscape photos from our service territory!

Stop by the office to pick up a copy today. Calendars are available on a first-come, first-serve basis while supplies last.

DUAL FUEL OFFERS BENEFITS TO MEMBERS, CO-OP AND THE GRID

A program offered by McLeod Co-op Power that provides home heating at a remarkable value by pairing electric heat with a dependable backup.

If you are a member enrolled in the program, known as “dual fuel,” knowing the “why” behind the moments your dual fuel heating is temporarily switched is likely important to you — especially during the long, cold months of winter.

Great River Energy, our wholesale power provider, makes the decision of when to shift participating members to their backup heat source for a variety of reasons, but affordability and reliability are the ultimate drivers.

The program is a win-win-win for all involved. Enrolled members benefit from a reduced electric rate, McLeod Co-op Power is able to manage local electricity demand and avoid expensive market purchases, and the entire regional grid benefits from reduced demand for electricity.

“On a cold winter day, when demand and market prices are high, our dual fuel program helps us, our members, and the grid as a whole by lowering demand on the system to avoid high market prices,” said Jeff Haase, Great River Energy’s director of member services.

RESPONDING TO DEMAND OFFERS BIG BENEFITS

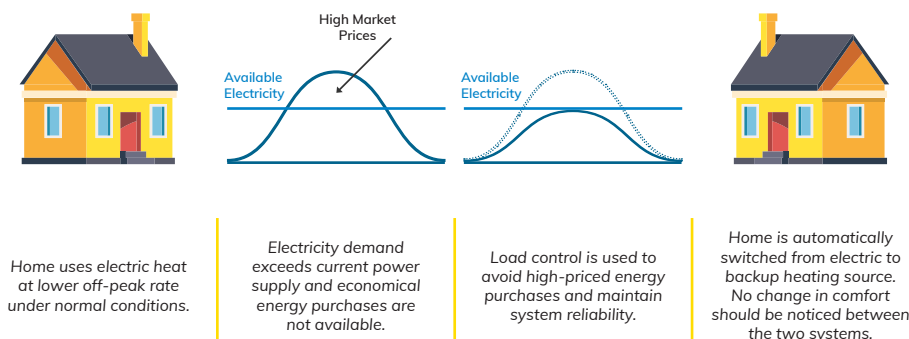
Dual fuel heating is one example of a “demand response” program, which are designed to reduce electricity demand to keep energy reliable and affordable.

The demand response system is launched by Great River Energy’s control center. Power system operators use computers to send tens of thousands of electronic signals through the power delivery system and into distribution power lines.

Receivers plugged into standard electrical current at member homes and businesses can read the signals and, when the appropriate message is sent, those receivers interrupt the electric power flowing to the heating system. When control is no longer needed, a signal is sent to turn the system back on.

Based on metering and market conditions, Great River Energy’s system operators and energy marketers know when a peak load period is approaching. Depending on the amount by which Great River Energy needs to reduce the peak, operators choose various groups of controlled load and turn them off using the demand response system.

Call (800) 494-6272 or email info@mcleodcoop.com for more information on the cooperative’s dual fuel program.



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, 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, audiotope, 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 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.

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DO NOT REMOVE YOUR METER WITHOUT CO-OP ASSISTANCE



Electricians and/or members are not authorized to pull an electric meter to perform work on a service. Electrical safety is a primary concern for McLeod Co-op Power. Removing or adjusting electrical equipment carries the potential to harm yourself and others. In attempt to prevent these risks, we stress the importance of never cutting the seal, tampering with, or removing a meter for any reason without assistance from the Co-op.

Our policy requires a trained co-op employee, using the proper protective equipment, to pull and reinstall any energized meter. A notice of two business days is requested, so coordinate your work needs with our team in advance by calling (800) 494-6272 during business hours (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.).

WARNING: If an electrician or member does pull an electric meter to disconnect a service, significantly higher fees will incur. Disconnection or tampering of a meter sends a power outage alarm to the co-op. If a line crew responds to the outage, the member will be billed at the applicable line crew service call rate of \$335 during business hours, \$505 on evenings or Saturdays, and \$670 on a Sunday or holiday.

Your cooperation is appreciated. Our only goal is to protect you, your neighbors and our line workers from possible injury.



REMINDER: STAY WARM AND STAY CONNECTED

As temperatures drop, McLeod Co-op Power reminds members of the protections available under Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule. This rule ensures that residential members meeting certain criteria are safeguarded from utility disconnections between October 1 and April 30, ensuring your primary heat source remains uninterrupted.

To qualify for protection, you must:

- Have a household income below 50% of the State Median Income.
- Contact McLeod Co-op to set up a payment arrangement and stay reasonably current with payments.

If you meet these conditions, your electricity will not be disconnected. If you're struggling to pay your bill, the Cooperative can help with payment options and provide information on local energy assistance programs. Inability to pay forms are also available upon request.

Should a disconnection notice be issued, McLeod Co-op will thoroughly investigate occupancy, notify affected members of their rights, and provide details on available resources.

For assistance or to apply for energy aid, visit the Minnesota Energy Assistance Program or contact your local EAP provider. Let's work together to keep your home safe and warm this winter!

For more information, see the list of energy assistance providers below.



ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS

KANDIYOHI, MCLEOD & MEEKER COUNTIES

United Community
Action Partnership
(800) 992-1710
Willmar: (320) 235-0850
Hutchinson: (320) 587-5244

MCLEOD COUNTY AREA

McLeod County
Social Service Center
(320) 864-3144
(800) 247-1756

Hutchinson:
(320) 484-4330

RENVILLE COUNTY AREA

United Community
Action Partnership
(320) 523-1842

SIBLEY COUNTY AREA

Sibley County Public Health
& Human Services
(507) 237-4000
(866) 396-9963

MN Valley Action Council
(800) 767-7139

Gaylord: (507) 237-2981
Mankato: (507) 345-6822

CARVER COUNTY AREA

Scott-Carver-Dakota
Community Action Agency
(952)-496-2125

WRIGHT COUNTY AREA

Wright County
Community Action
(320) 963-6500

STAY COZY AND SAVE ENERGY THIS WINTER

Winter in Minnesota can be harsh, but staying warm doesn't have to mean high energy bills. By making a few simple adjustments around your home, you can boost energy efficiency, stay comfortable, and save money. Here are six practical tips to help you keep the cold out and the warmth in this season.



SEAL AIR LEAKS

Use weatherstripping or caulk around windows, doors, and other openings like electrical outlets to prevent drafts and keep the cold out.



USE A SMART THERMOSTAT

Set your thermostat to automatically lower the temperature while you're asleep or away and raise it when you're home.



OPTIMIZE HOME HEATING SYSTEMS

Regularly replace furnace filters and schedule annual maintenance to keep your heating system efficient.



TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SUNLIGHT

Open south-facing curtains during the day for natural heat and close them at night to prevent heat loss.



ADD INSULATION

Insulate attics, walls, and crawl spaces to retain heat. Check around pipes and wiring for gaps and add insulation if necessary.



USE EFFICIENT LIGHTING

Replace traditional incandescent bulbs with LED lights, which are more energy-efficient and last longer, especially for holiday decorations.

OFFICE PHONE

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

24-HOUR OUTAGE PHONE

(800) 927-5685

WEBSITE

www.mcleodcoop.com

EMAIL ADDRESS

mcpainfo@mcleodcoop.com

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ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Taking steps to help your home heating system run more efficiently can reduce energy use and lower your winter bills. Check to see if any air vents around your home are blocked by furniture, curtains or other items. Obstructed vents force your heating system to work harder than necessary and can increase pressure in the ductwork, causing cracks and leaks to form. If necessary, consider purchasing a vent extender, which can be placed over a vent to redirect air flow from underneath furniture or other obstructions.



3515 11th St. East
Glencoe, MN 55336

WWW.MCLEODCOOP.COM

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YOUR VOICE, YOUR CO-OP: HELP SHAPE OUR FUTURE!

At McLeod Co-op Power, everything we do is powered by you—our members. That's why we're asking for your input! By taking our member survey, you can help us improve our services, address your needs, and ensure we're on the right path for the future.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR YOUR CO-OP!

We're more than just your electricity provider - we're your partner in powering your home, farm, and business. Your feedback is the key to understanding what's working, what could be better, and how we can grow together.

Completing the survey is simple and only takes a few minutes. Plus, your input directly impacts the decisions we make to serve you better.



HOW TO PARTICIPATE:

Scan the QR code OR visit
www.mcleodcoop.com/survey

Your feedback matters. Help us create a stronger, smarter co-op that works better for everyone.

**DON'T WAIT—
SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK TODAY!**