

# MCLEOD COOPERATIVE POWER NEWS

APRIL 2025

## STRENGTHENING RELIABILITY: MCLEOD CO-OP POWER'S 2025 VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

*At McLeod Co-op Power, maintaining a safe and reliable electric system requires year-round dedication, and a key part of that commitment is proactive vegetation management. Over the past few years, significant progress has been made in clearing trees and overgrowth from power line rights-of-way, but as we look ahead, we recognize the need to take an even more aggressive approach.*

### 2024: A YEAR OF PROGRESS

In 2024, our vegetation management program exceeded expectations, completing 15 percent more work than initially planned. Crews successfully cleared over 240 miles of right-of-way across multiple townships, including 68.8 miles in Acoma, 74.35 miles in Hutchinson, 55.6 miles in Hale, and 45.11 miles in Winsted. Additionally, work began in Hassan Valley, though the exact number of miles completed there is still being assessed.

While these efforts made a significant impact, vegetation in our area grows back quickly, and previous trimming cycles have not been sufficient to keep up with the regrowth. Clearing only five

to seven feet is not enough to ensure long-term system reliability and safety. To address this, our focus in 2025 will be on fully implementing the board policy that requires a 15-foot clearance on both sides of the right-of-way. Maintaining this clearance is critical for reducing outages, improving safety, and ensuring our crews can quickly access power lines for repairs, especially during storms.

### WHAT'S NEXT FOR 2025?

This year, we will continue expanding our efforts, beginning in May where we left off in Hassan Valley. From there, our vegetation management work will move eastward, covering:

- Rich Valley
- Bergen
- Camden
- Young America
- Helen
- Glencoe (if time allows)

By prioritizing these areas, we aim to further improve system reliability, reduce outage risks, and enhance safety for both members and line crews.

**Continued on page 2.**

## TREE CUTTING REQUESTS

Each year, McLeod Co-op Power receives numerous tree cutting requests. While we remove or trim trees for safety, system reliability, and compliance with board policies and the National Electric Safety Code (NESC), not all requests meet the guidelines for McLeod Co-op to perform the work.

### MCLEOD CO-OP WILL TRIM OR REMOVE TREES IF:

- Trees are in McLeod Co-op's 15-foot right-of-way
- Trees are, or will, negatively impact the power lines

### MCLEOD CO-OP WILL NOT TRIM OR REMOVE TREES IF:

- Trees are not affecting the power lines
- Trees are leaning away from the power lines
- Trees are over structures including homes, garages, outbuildings, campers, sewers, etc.
- Trees are not accessible by co-op equipment – we do not climb trees for removal

\*Trees outside the 15ft ROW are usually considered very low risk to have negative impact.

If McLeod Co-op can't trim your tree, contact a private tree service. We can drop power lines for safe removal—please notify us two weeks in advance to schedule. Call Operations at (800) 494-6272.

DIG SAFE  
THIS SPRING

05

LINEWORKER SAFETY  
AND APPRECIATION

06



# VEGETATION MANAGEMENT CONTINUED...

## A LONG-TERM COMMITMENT

One thing is certain—trees don't stop growing, and neither do we. A key takeaway from our recent efforts is the importance of maintaining an ongoing trimming schedule. Without regular upkeep, previously cleared areas can quickly become problematic again. By staying ahead of growth, we can improve system reliability, reduce safety hazards, and ensure a more sustainable vegetation management program for years to come.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

We appreciate the cooperation of our members in helping us maintain a safe and effective right-of-way. Here's how you can assist:

- **Watch for Notifications** – If work is scheduled in your area, you'll receive a door hanger notification about two weeks before it begins. Crews from TreeStory,

our vegetation management partner, will be working in marked vehicles with the company's logo for easy identification.

- **Plant Wisely** – If you're planning to plant trees on your property, remember that large, tall-growing trees should be at least 50 feet from power lines to prevent future conflicts.
- **Report Problem Trees** – If you spot a compromised tree near a power line, call us! We'll assess whether it falls under our responsibility or if an independent tree service is needed.

## KEEPING OUR SYSTEM STRONG TOGETHER

By working together, we can ensure a more reliable electric system and a safer environment for everyone. Thank you for your continued support in keeping our right-of-way clear and our power lines safe.

## 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

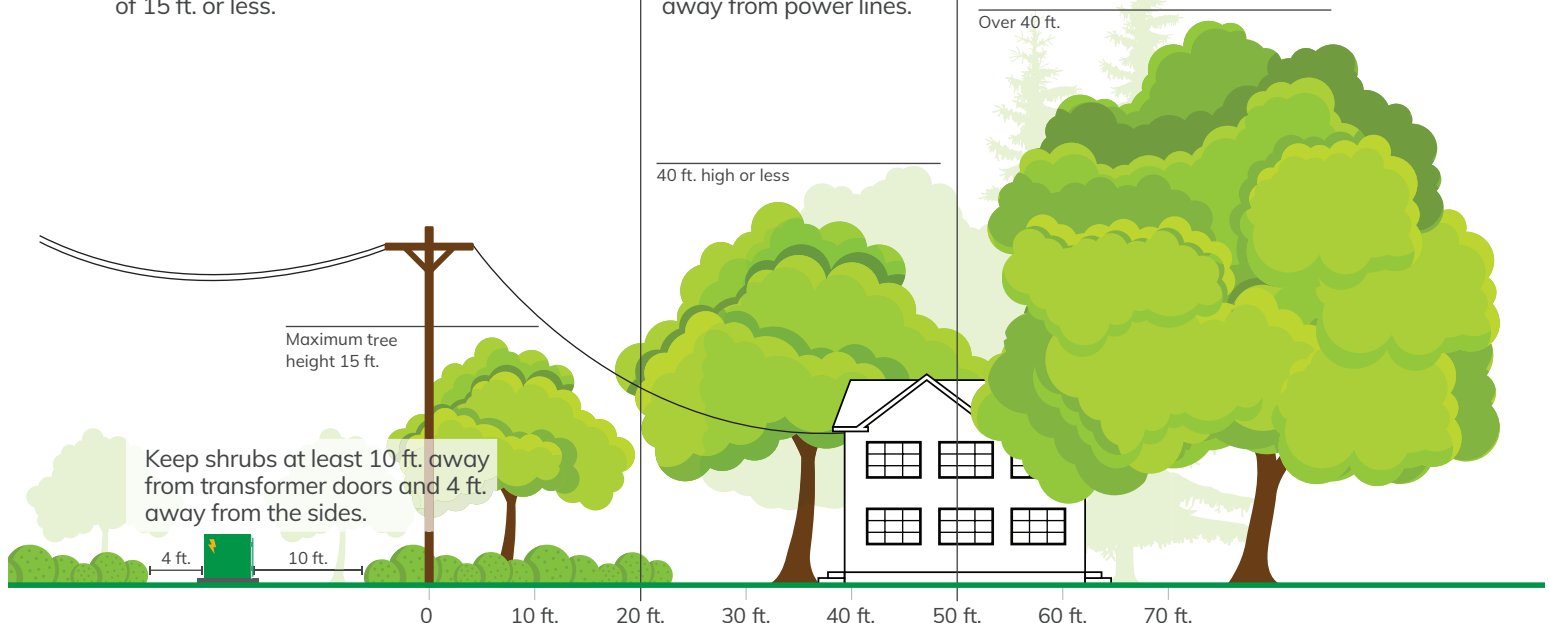
Avoid planting within 20 ft. of power lines. If planting is unavoidable, only plant shrubs and small trees that reach a mature height of 15 ft. or less.

### 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.



## CEO MESSAGE

The other day, I was privileged to testify at the Minnesota House Energy Finance and Policy Committee on proposed legislation sponsored by Representative Dave Baker. The legislation would change how cooperatives and municipalities value excess generation by members installing solar or wind behind their meters. It would align the payment for the excess energy to wholesale pricing, as opposed to what we must pay today—which is a retail rate.

If this legislation were to pass, it would only apply to future installations. We would keep track of the excess generation for over a year for those installations, and if there is still excess, we would pay our members a wholesale rate closer to the actual value for us.

This is just one of three major legislative initiatives the Minnesota Cooperative family is working on behalf of our members. There are also conversations around Property tax and lifting the nuclear moratorium in Minnesota. Regarding property taxes, there has been some confusion recently about whether rural meters and security/field lights should be included in property tax calculations instead of the per-member tax we have been paying since 1939. The Senate Taxes Committee heard SF132, which would clarify this for everyone. It looks like everyone is in support of what we are trying to do.

A coalition of stakeholders across multiple industries leads the discussion when lifting the nuclear moratorium. With the mandate of being 100% carbon-free by 2040 in Minnesota, nuclear technology cannot be excluded. Technology around nuclear power is evolving rapidly, which could make it safer and more cost-effective. If Minnesota continues to keep new nuclear power from being built in the state, it will be built somewhere else. In addition to limiting access to a power generation resource that runs 24/7, we will be giving up the potential to bring good jobs to our state in the construction and running of these plants. There are bills (SF350 and SF468) working on this issue.



**CEO RON MEIER**

I also want to touch on the federal tariffs that have been in the news of late. As you may know, President Trump recently enacted (at the time of me writing this column) 25% federal tariffs on Canadian imports, as well as the levy of 10% on Canadian natural gas, oil, and electricity, and I thought it would be good to share some information we received from Great River Energy's, our wholesale power provider, CEO David Saggau.

"As you are all aware, 25% federal tariffs on Canadian imports went into effect yesterday. The executive order also places a levy of 10% on Canadian natural gas, oil, and electricity. Great River Energy received 2% of our energy from Manitoba Hydro resources in 2024. Less than 1% of MISO's total 2024 energy was supplied via Canadian imports. We do not expect the tariffs to have a significant impact on electricity prices in the wholesale market at the present time" Saggau reported.

On a related note, MCPA may see some impact on the costs of purchasing materials we use to operate our distribution system, but it's a bit early to understand how these tariffs will impact supply and ultimately pricing. With that said, we are fortunate that much of the distribution materials we receive from our suppliers are manufactured here in the United States.

Please note that while this is a fluid situation, we are monitoring these topics closely and will keep you as up-to-date as possible via our monthly newsletter and Facebook page as any relevant updates are available.

**Cooperatively**

*R1 PL*

## MARCH 2025 BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of McLeod Cooperative Power Association was held on March 25th, 2025, at McLeod Coop headquarters. Nine board members, CEO Ron Meier, the Co-op's attorney, and department managers participated in the meeting.

Highlights of the meeting included:

- The outage report for the month of February was reviewed with a total of 25 outages affecting 37 consumers.
- A motion was carried approving the 2025 Annual Meeting Notice.
- A motion was carried approving the 2025 Nominating Committee.
- It was reported that the deadline for students to apply for the Line-worker Scholarship is April 15th, 2025.
- It was reported that fifty-five students from Ridgewater College visited MCPA to learn more about the distribution industry.
- Manager of Finance Jakel reviewed the February financials.
- A motion was carried approving a \$1,000 donation to MREA for funding their new building.
- Board of Director Hlavka gave his monthly Great River Energy report.



# 2024 CAPITAL CREDITS UPDATE

At McLeod Cooperative Power, we are committed to serving our members efficiently and responsibly. This past year, our financials were managed tightly, meaning we didn't take a penny more than needed to provide you with safe, reliable power. As a result, there were no excess margins to allocate for capital credits from McLeod Cooperative Power in 2024.

However, we're pleased to share that you will still receive an allocation of capital credits from our power supplier, Great River Energy—another way you benefit from being part of a cooperative.

We appreciate your trust and support. If you have any questions, please contact our office at 320-864-3148.

Thank you for being a valued member!



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# 2025 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

## HVAC

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

Electric Thermal Storage Space Heating \$50 per kW

Ductless Air Source Heat Pump High Efficiency Systems ≤ 1 ton: \$150  
(≥ 14.3 SEER2 & ≥ 7.5 HSPF2)

Ductless Air Source Heat Pump Premium Efficiency Systems ≤ 1 ton: \$250  
(2025 CEE Tier 1 listed)

Ductless Air Source Heat Pump High Efficiency Systems ≤ 1 Ton - 5 Tons: \$750  
(≥ 14.3 SEER2 & ≥ 7.5 HSPF2)

Ductless Air Source Heat Pump Premium Efficiency Systems ≤ 1 Ton - 5 Tons: \$1,000  
(2025 CEE Tier 1 listed)

Ducted/Hybrid Air Source Heat Pump High Efficiency Systems Up To 5 Tons: \$750  
(≥ 14.3 SEER2 & ≥ 7.5 HSPF2)

Ducted/Hybrid Air Source Heat Pump Premium Efficiency Systems Up To 5 Tons: \$1,000  
(2025 CEE Tier 1 listed)

Ground Source Heat Pump \$400 per ton

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



## YOUR VOICE POWERS YOUR CO-OP!

We're more than just an electricity provider—we're your partner in keeping your home, farm, and business running strong. Your feedback is the key to understanding what's working, what could be better, and how we can serve you in the future.

Take a few minutes to complete our survey and make an impact on the decisions that serve you better.

Scan the QR code or visit  
[www.mcleodcoop.com/survey](https://www.mcleodcoop.com/survey)





## BUILDING OR EXPANDING IN 2025?

**Does your spring to-do list include a project that might require new electrical service or changes to existing service? If so, let us know!**

It's common for the Cooperative to receive many requests for service in the spring. However, projects requiring electric lines to be built, rebuilt or moved aren't as simple as they may seem and sometimes can be more complex than members realize.

We strongly encourage anyone thinking about projects that might require new or modified electrical service to contact the Cooperative and begin the planning process as early as possible.

We'll discuss your project and address any electrical needs that might arise. If your service needs upgrading or alterations, getting on our construction schedule is important because it helps us ensure that the necessary electrical equipment and materials are available. Longer lead times and supply chain delays make this all the more important in 2025.

For questions, please contact the McLeod Co-op Power during regular business hours at (800) 494-6272.

## APRIL SPECIAL!

### Get one free freeze or flood sensor

with three-year monitoring agreement



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## CALL 811

## BEFORE

## YOU DIG

**Spring is right around the corner, and that means many homeowners and businesses will soon be tackling outdoor projects. Whether you're planting trees, installing a fence, or breaking ground on a larger construction project, safety should always be the first step.**

### BEFORE YOU DIG, CALL 811

Minnesota law requires that anyone planning to dig—whether with a shovel or heavy equipment—must contact Gopher State One Call at least 48 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) before starting. Dialing 811 or submitting an online request alerts local utilities to mark underground lines, helping you avoid dangerous and costly accidents.

### MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

While McLeod Co-op Power and other utilities will mark their underground facilities up to the meter, members are responsible for locating and marking any private underground lines on their

property. These private lines may include:

- Electric wiring to outbuildings
- Sprinkler systems
- Propane or private gas lines
- Sewer and water lines
- Underground pet fences

If you have private lines, you'll need to hire a private locator to identify their exact location before digging.

### STAY SAFE AND AVOID COSTLY DAMAGES

Hitting a buried utility line can cause power outages, costly repairs, and even serious injury or death. Always wait for utility locates to be completed and respect the marks by digging carefully around them.

*For more information or to submit a locate request, visit [www.gopherstateonecall.org](http://www.gopherstateonecall.org) or dial 811 before you dig.*



# SPECIALIZED GEAR KEEPS LINEWORKERS SAFE

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association has dedicated the second Monday in April as Lineworker Appreciation Day. Hundreds of cooperatives across the U.S. will be thanking lineworkers for their service and publicly recognizing them for their hard work on April 14.

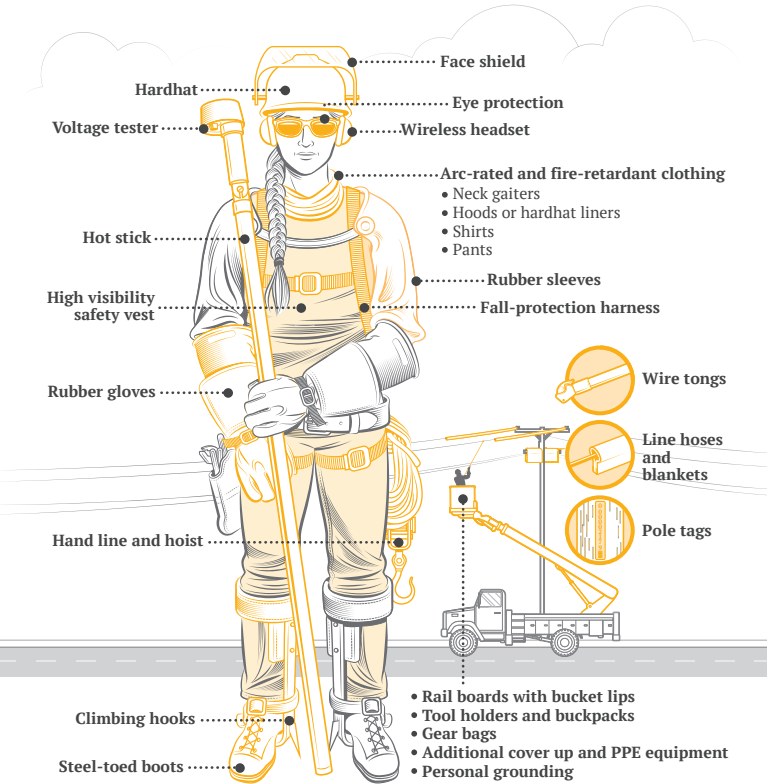
The lineworkers at McLeod Cooperative Power construct, maintain and repair power lines and other electrical equipment essential to providing electric service. They work on infrastructure that is often energized and located high in the air.

Thanks to specialized equipment and training, lineworkers are able to do their jobs safely.

Lineworker gear provides protection from electrical shock, falls and other hazards inherent to their job. Apparel is fire resistant, high visibility and weatherproof. Lineworkers also have practices and gear to provide protection when working high on poles or in elevated buckets.

Lineworkers also complete intensive training. Technical college courses educate them on electrical theory and the foundational principles of line work. They must complete a four-year apprenticeship program, including 8,000 hours of on-the-job training and four years of coursework, to become a skilled journeyman.

The graphic to the right shows just some of the necessary apparel and tools that a lineworker may use on any given workday to ensure they serve members safely.



## STAYING SAFE

Lineworkers have a dizzying array of gear they carry and wear to safely do their jobs. Some items, like climbing hooks and hot sticks, have been around since the early days of electricity, though they've been updated and improved over the years. Others, like wireless headsets and arc-rated clothing, are more modern innovations. Here's a comprehensive (though not exhaustive) look at the tools line crews use to stay safe.



CELEBRATE  
the Power Behind Your Power.

LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY  
April 14, 2025

Our lineworkers are on call 24/7, 365 days a year. They give their all to keep your power on. Say thank you with us on Lineworker Appreciation Day, April 14.

# MOVE OVER TO KEEP UTILITY WORKERS SAFE



*Electric utility employees at McLeod Co-op Power work on overhead and underground power lines, perform work at electric substations, use heavy equipment and check electric meters every day. Electricity can be extremely dangerous and is one of the biggest hazards that our employees encounter. But another big threat is traffic.*

Oftentimes, utility employees must park alongside a road, turn on flashing lights and place traffic cones in the roadway as an indication to passing motorists that work is being done. Doing so creates a work zone. It's important to move over when you see flashing lights to keep our co-op workers safe. Failing to do so endangers the lives of utility workers and other emergency responders.

Minnesota's Ted Foss Move Over Law states that when traveling on a road with two or more lanes, drivers must move one full lane away from stopped emergency vehicles with their flashing lights activated. Most drivers are aware of this law as it applies to police officers, firefighters and ambulances but it also applies to utility, maintenance and construction vehicles. Working along roadways can be dangerous and moving over is the law. If it's not possible to move over one full lane, drivers are required to reduce their speed until their vehicle has completely passed the parked or stopped vehicle.

McLeod Co-op Power employees are working to ensure that our communities have reliable electric service. Please follow safe driving practices when you see them and move over so that everyone can go home safely at the end of each day.

## 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

Turn your suds into savings. Lower your energy use in the laundry room by washing clothes with cold water whenever possible, as heating water accounts for most of the energy used in a laundry cycle. Wash full loads to make the most of energy savings, and use high-efficiency detergent designed for cold washes. For drying cycles, clean the lint filter before each load to improve airflow and use dryer balls to reduce drying time.





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## REMEMBER ELECTRICAL SAFETY DURING SPRING PLANTING

*As you prepare for planting season, don't forget to plan for safety. There are many aspects to safety on the farm, but electrical safety is often overlooked. Keep these safety types in mind as you prepare for planting.*



### TRAIN OTHERS

Train anyone working on your farm, including family members and seasonal workers, about electrical hazards.



### SAFETY FIRST

Have daily meetings to review the day's work and discuss safety implications. Know and review where the power lines are, the clearance required, and the proper position of extensions as they are transported.



### WAIT TO UNFOLD

Remind workers to fold or unfold extensions well into the field, not close to the field's edge where power lines are typically located.



### USE A SPOTTER

When working in the vicinity of power lines, always have a spotter on the ground, who can direct you away from power lines or poles if you are getting too close.



### DO NOT EXIT YOUR CAB

If your machine or truck makes contact with a power line, pole, or guy wire, you could become electricity's path to ground and become electrocuted if you step out of the cab.



### CALL 911

Call 911 to have your electric utility dispatched to de-energize the power source. Only exit the cab if your equipment is on fire. If that happens, make a solid jump out and hop away with feet together as far as you can.

