



STAY SAFE AROUND THE BIG GREEN BOX

You may have seen big green boxes in residential yards over the years and wondered what purpose they serve. Those green boxes are actually called pad-mounted transformers, and they change voltage from higher levels to a level you can use in your home for electronics, appliances and lighting. This equipment is vital to providing electricity to at least one home, and often several in a neighborhood.

Pad-mounted transformers are surrounded by underground cables that can extend in several directions to distribute power to homes and businesses, so members should not landscape or dig around these boxes. Hitting a cable could result in electrical shock or disruption of service. Children should never touch, climb or play on pad-mounted transformers and shouldn't put fingers or sticks into cracks in the housing. Only employees from McLeod Co-op Power should be near this equipment.

Homeowners sometimes try to obscure these green boxes by planting shrubs and flowers around them, but that can make them difficult to access by electric field workers and can make them dangerous. Co-op crews need at least 10 feet of clearance at the opening side of a pad-mounted transformer, and 4 feet of

open space is preferred at the rear and on the sides of the metal housing. That distance gives crews enough space to use the specialized tools they need to work with energized equipment. It also ensures that crews working on a transformer have space to maneuver in case they have to back away if problems occur.

McLeod Co-op crews must access a pad-mounted transformer to test, maintain, repair and replace the equipment. If a technician encounters an obstacle that could create a hazardous situation, the worker will notify the member with a door hanger or phone call to set up an appointment for a different day. This may cause the work to be delayed.

In an outage situation when time is of essence, McLeod Co-op crews may need to remove items blocking their way so that they can access the equipment and restore power.

One of the top priorities for McLeod Co-op is to keep everyone safe and to keep electricity reliable for our member-owners. We appreciate your help in keeping electrical equipment clear of any obstacles, so our employees can stay safe and accomplish this task more efficiently.

EASY WAYS TO PAY YOUR BILL

McLeod Co-op Power offers multiple convenient payment options. Be sure to pay by the due date to avoid late fees. For any billing questions, call (800) 494-6272.

AUTOPAY:

Automatically pay on the 28th of each month via checking or savings. The enrollment form is online at www.mcleodcoop.com/i-want-to/pay-options/.

SMARTHUB:

Manage your account and pay your bill through SmartHub online or via the app. You can also view usage, receive alerts, and more.

PAYNOW:

Make one-time payments online without a SmartHub account by clicking the "Pay Now" button on our website.

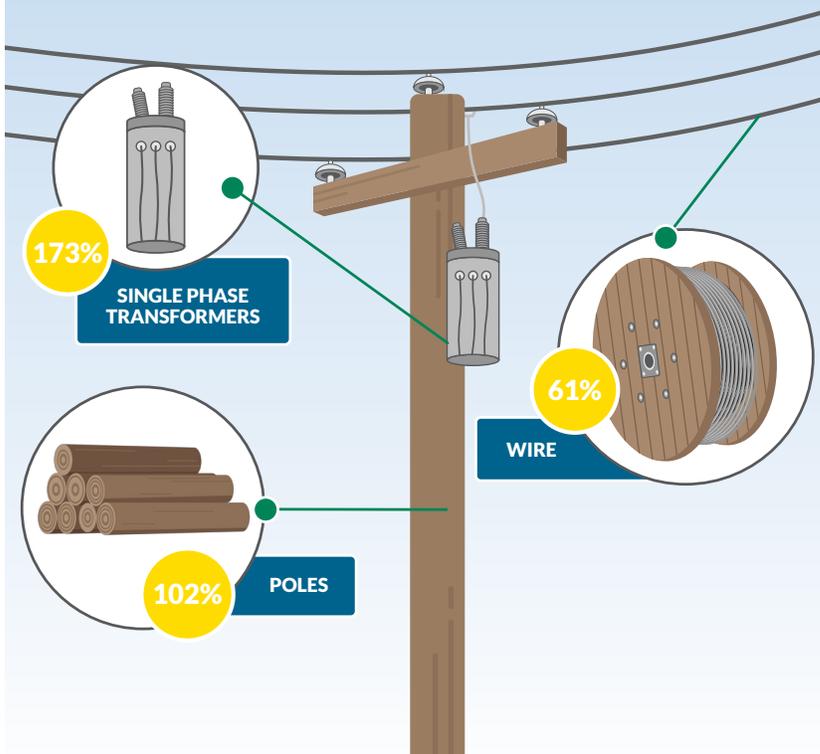
PHONE:

Pay securely 24/7 using our automated phone system.

Please note our new number:

Call (320) 864-3148 or (800) 494-6272 and choose option #2. Have your account number ready from the top right of your bill.

UNDERSTANDING THE COST OF POWER DELIVERY



When you flip a switch or plug in a device, there is a complex system at work behind the scenes to make sure electricity gets to you safely and reliably. At McLeod Co-op Power, that system depends on a wide range of materials including transformers, power poles, wire, meters, and safety equipment.

Over the past few years, the cost of these essential materials has changed significantly. For example, transformers, which are vital for stepping down high-voltage power to levels that can be used in homes and businesses, have seen some of the largest price increases. The same is true for poles, wire, and other components that keep the system running safely and efficiently.

The graphic below shows the actual price changes for some of these key materials at McLeod Co-op Power since 2020. These numbers help illustrate the real costs involved in maintaining and improving the electric grid right here in our own community.

At McLeod Co-op Power, we work hard to plan ahead, budget wisely, and keep members informed. Understanding what goes into delivering reliable electricity helps everyone see the value behind the service that powers homes, businesses, and everyday life.

BY THE NUMBERS | Q2 2025

McLeod Co-op Power's leadership spends substantial time managing and providing oversight of the Co-op's operations, including ensuring that the organization remains in a strong and stable financial condition. Below is an overview of our Second Quarter Unaudited Financial Report.



| | 2025 | 2024 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Cost of Purchased Power | \$7,453,939 | \$6,504,283 |
| Other Operating Expenses | \$4,746,423 | \$4,744,095 |
| Total Cost of Electric Service | \$12,200,361 | \$11,249,539 |



TOTAL MARGINS
\$(22,458)
 2024 Comparison: \$95,528

| | 2024 | 2024 |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Operating Margins | \$(373,626) | \$(146,488) |
| Non-Operating Margins | \$351,168 | \$242,016 |



AVERAGE kWh's
 used by residential members



CEO MESSAGE

TODD'S WATCHING – ESPECIALLY BETWEEN 5 AND 9 PM (WEEKDAYS ONLY)

Starting in Fall, your McLeod Cooperative Power bill will include a new number: your time-of-day demand. That's the highest amount of electricity you use at one time between 5:00 PM and 9:00 PM on weekdays, our busiest hours of the day.

The demand is part of our Time of Day Demand rate—TODD for short. We like to think of Todd as a guy in billing. You might remember him from past newsletters, always keeping an eye on the numbers to help us track our peak demand costs. Last week, Todd got stuck in bumper-to-bumper traffic on his way home from work. He couldn't help but notice how much the traffic felt like our electric system between 5 and 9 PM, Monday through Friday. Everyone was trying to "merge" onto the grid at the same time, with ovens preheating, dryers spinning, and dishwashers running, much like rush hour traffic, everything bogged down.

That "traffic jam" in electricity is what drives up our demand costs. The bigger the jam, the more "lanes" we must build to handle it. By spreading out usage, we can keep the electric highway moving smoothly and keep costs down for everyone.

HOW TO KEEP TODD HAPPY (AND YOUR BILL IN CHECK):

- Don't stack your big appliances – If dinner is in the oven, hold off on the dryer until later in the evening.
- Shift to off-peak hours – Use delay-start features so laundry, dishwashers, or EV charging happen before 5 PM or after 9 PM.
- Pre-heat or pre-cool – Let your heating or cooling system get ahead of the peak window so it works less when demand is high.



CEO RON MEIER

- Spread it out – A little timing shift goes a long way.

TODD SAYS:

Weekends are my days off, too. But Monday through Friday from 5 to 9 PM? That's my rush hour. Spread things out, and we'll all get home faster."

Making these small changes can help you save money and might even earn a rare nod of approval from Todd.

COME CELEBRATE WITH US

Join us for our anniversary open house on Thursday, September 11th, from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM at our headquarters. We'll have coffee, snacks, and friendly faces (and if we're lucky, a Todd sighting). Stop in and help us celebrate!

Cooperatively

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AUGUST 2025 BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of McLeod Cooperative Power Association was held on August 26, 2025, at McLeod Coop headquarters. Nine board members, CEO Ron Meier, and department managers participated in the meeting.

Highlights of the meeting included:

- The outage report for the month of July was reviewed with a total of 97 outages, affecting 1,087 consumers.
- Operations Manager Brady reported that TreeStory has been challenged by weather, but all work is expected to be completed by the end of November. He also reported that the land needed for the Hook Lake Substation is set for closing on August 29th
- Operations Specialist Ebert reviewed MCPA's Basic Life Saving Rules and provided an overview of the new incident reporting process implemented by the Safety Committee.
- A motion was carried to approve the 2026 Annual Meeting date for July 14, 2026, at the Crow River Winery.
- Alison Deelstra from CFC presented on Key Rate Trend Financial Analysis.
- Manager of Finance Jakel reviewed the July financials and the Financial Forecast, which included information on the Long-Term Debt & Interest Expense.
- A motion was carried to approve Resolution 2025-08-01 Authorizing the Execution of Contract Amendment with the Western Area Power Administration.

MEMBER NOTICE: COLD WEATHER RULE



The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule protects residential utility customers during the cold winter months. Under this rule, McLeod Cooperative Power will not disconnect your electricity from October 1 through April 30 if you meet the Cold Weather Rule requirements.

In order to qualify for winter shut-off protection, you must meet all of the following conditions:

- Your total household, not individual, income is less than 50% of the state median income.
- You contact the Co-op, set up a payment arrangement, and are reasonably current with scheduled payments.

It's important to understand that the Cold Weather Rule still allows electricity to be shut off for non-payment. You will only be protected if electricity provides your primary source of heat and you meet the conditions above.

Before disconnecting service to a residential member during the cold weather months, McLeod Co-op will provide a disconnect notice, statement of member rights and responsibilities, a list of local energy assistance providers, and available payment plans or options to the affected member. Inability to pay forms are available upon request.

At McLeod Cooperative Power our members are important. We would rather work with you to set up a plan to pay your bill than disconnect your service. If you are worried about paying your electric bill this winter, reach out to us at (800) 494-6272 before the due date of your bill.

Winter will be here soon. Let's work together to keep everyone safe and warm.



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

IMPORTANT FARM SAFETY INFORMATION

As you are working on your farm, 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 tips in mind as you prepare for harvest.



TRAIN OTHERS

Train anyone working on your farm, including family members and seasonal workers, about the dangers of electrical hazards and how to work safely around power lines and electrical equipment.



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.



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.



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.



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.



CALL 911

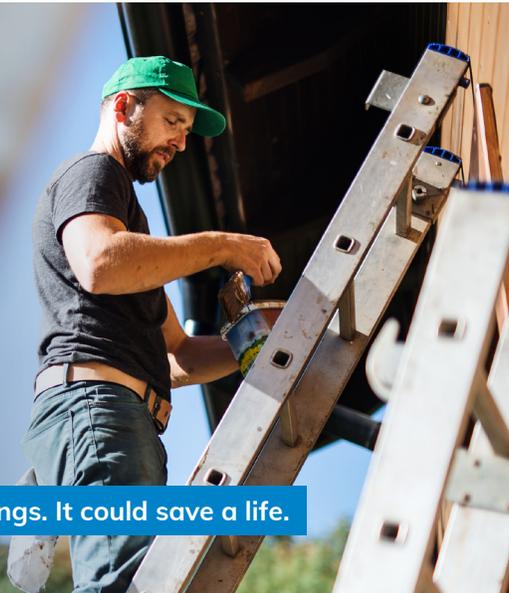
Call 911 to have your electric utility dispatched to de-energize the power source. Only exit the cab if your equipment is on fire. If that happens, make a solid jump out and hop away with feet together as far as you can.

STAY SAFE

Before tackling home projects, keep electrical safety in mind:

- Use caution on roofs, gutters, and trees.
- Look up before moving ladders or tall equipment.
- Stay at least 10 feet from overhead power lines.
- Call 811 before digging, lines may be underground.

Take a moment. Check your surroundings. It could save a life.



Report an Outage:

Anytime 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Call: **1.800.927.5685**

THE CALM IN THE STORM: DISPATCH AT WORK



When the power goes out, members often picture line crews heading out to make repairs. But behind the scenes, McLeod Co-op Power's Dispatch Center is the hub: coordinating information, guiding crews, and ensuring safe, efficient restoration.

A DAY IN DISPATCH

On a normal day, dispatchers handle a wide range of responsibilities, coordinating jobs for crews and electricians, answering member calls, mapping, scheduling, and keeping safety and workflow on track. The role requires balancing many moving parts to keep the system running smoothly.

For Operations Specialist/Safety, Debbie Ebert, that variety is what makes the job both challenging and rewarding. "No two days are ever the same," she explained. "There's always something new to troubleshoot or coordinate, even before an outage happens."

That routine shifts instantly when an outage occurs. "The phones light up and the outage reports start rolling in, and suddenly you're just trying to grasp how big the situation really is," said Assistant Operations Manager, Gregg Nistler. At that point, dispatchers quickly gather details and determine next steps. As Debbie explained, "During office hours, if it's just one meter, I contact the member to see if they are aware of the outage and dispatch accordingly. If the member calls with partial power, voltage issues, or a power blip (blinking lights), we will create a service order to have our meter tech check the meter to see if it is localized or affecting more members. If the outage affects more members, we skip those steps and send a crew right away."

TRACKING AND PRIORITIZING

Dispatchers rely on advanced tools like NISC Outage Management Software and Landis+Gyr meters to monitor outages in real time. These systems can alert dispatchers within a minute when a meter goes off. During large storm events, however, the volume of data can overwhelm the system, which means dispatchers must also rely heavily on member phone calls and field reports to get a full picture.

With multiple outages happening at once, prioritization becomes critical. Safety always comes first. Downed lines, poles blocking roads, and 911 calls are handled immediately. After that, the focus shifts to restoring service to the greatest number of members as quickly as possible. "We determine how many members are out and what crews are available."

said Debbie. "From there, we coordinate who goes where."

Staker, Curt Hanson, who also serves as a dispatcher, pointed out the challenge of uncertainty. "Sometimes you're not sure where the problem is, and you're trying to figure it out from a desk chair. That's when communication with crews in the field is vital."

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

During major events, radio is still the preferred communication tool, letting crews hear updates in real time and be aware of conditions across the service area. Dispatch also tracks progress through the outage management system, monitoring meters as they come back online.

The most complex outage events require teamwork well beyond the co-op's normal crew. "Last year, we had multiple smaller outages spread across the entire system," Debbie recalled. "We had to bring in assistance from other cooperatives. We stationed one crew at each substation and worked largest to smallest, while keeping an eye on medical needs and emergency calls."

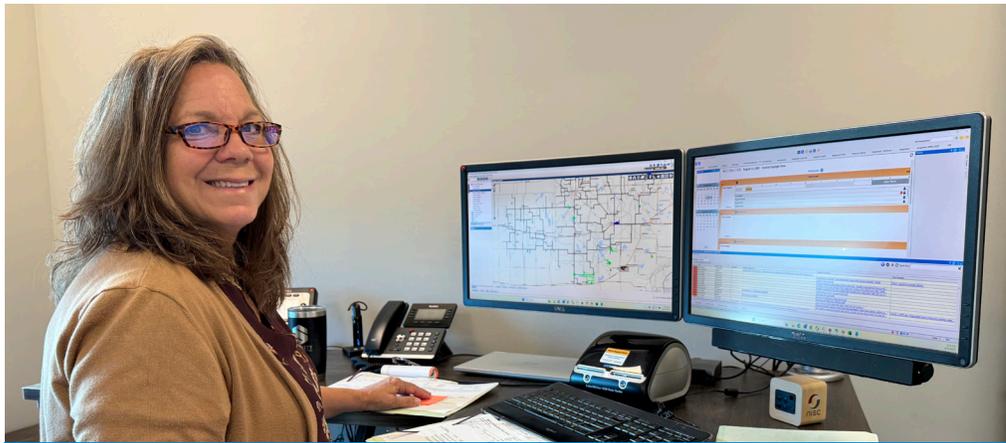
Gregg emphasized that staying one step ahead of the crews is both the biggest challenge and the most rewarding part of the job. "You don't want them backtracking, and you always have to make sure a line isn't energized while crews are working on it. Safety of our crews and members is our number one priority."

WORKING UNDER PRESSURE

Dispatchers know that outage response is not just about logistics, it's about people. "The most rewarding part," said Curt, "is when all members have their power restored and we know every crew is safe." Debbie agreed: "When the lights are back on and the crews are home safe with their families, that's when we can finally breathe."

Staying calm under pressure is part of the job. As Debbie explained, "There's no reason to fret until we know what's going on. Once the crews assess the damage, then we move forward step by step."

At McLeod Co-op Power, the dispatch center is the steady heartbeat of outage response. While members see the inconvenience of a storm, dispatchers see the responsibility: balancing urgency, safety, and efficiency to bring the lights back on one home, one crew, one community at a time.



TIPS FROM DISPATCH: HOW MEMBERS CAN PREPARE FOR POWER OUTAGES

- **Report outages promptly.** Don't assume your neighbors have already called. Reporting helps us pinpoint problem areas faster. Use the SmartHub app or call our outage line directly.

Report an Outage / After Hours:

Anytime 24 hours a day, 365 days a year by calling 1-800-927-5685.

- **Keep your contact info up to date.** Accurate phone numbers and service addresses help us link outage reports to specific locations and respond efficiently.
- **Prepare an emergency kit.** Stock flashlights, batteries, water, snacks, and necessary medications. A battery-powered radio and power pack for charging your phone are also great to have on hand.
- **Stay away from downed lines.** Always assume a downed line is energized. Report it immediately and keep others clear of the area.
- **Turn off major appliances during an outage.** This prevents overloads when power is restored and helps protect your equipment.
- **Check our outage map.** Our online outage map is updated frequently, so you can track restoration progress and see known trouble areas.
- **Be patient during large-scale events.** Crews work as quickly and safely as possible, prioritizing outages that restore power to the most members first.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Take advantage of "shoulder months," which refer to the transitional periods between peak heating and cooling seasons. During the fall, these milder weeks typically occur between September and November. Shoulder months offer a great opportunity to reduce home energy consumption as the need for extensive heating or cooling is reduced. Look for simple ways to boost indoor comfort without running your heating and cooling system. Use ceiling fans and open windows on breezy days to ventilate your home. On cooler days, add a layer of clothing and avoid running the heat.

OFFICE PHONE

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

24-HOUR OUTAGE PHONE

(800) 927-5685

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The McLeod Cooperative Power News (USPS 2220) is published monthly by McLeod Cooperative Power Association, 3515 11th St. East, Glencoe, MN 55336-0070. Subscription rate: \$7.56 per year for members and \$15.11 per year for non-members.

Periodicals Postage Rate is at Hutchinson, MN, 55350 and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
McLeod Coop Power News, 3515 11th Street E,
Glencoe, MN 55336-0070

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SAFETY DEMONSTRATIONS

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IN THE KNOW**



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