



## IF THE LIGHTS GO OUT: START HERE

**Power outages can happen unexpectedly, whether from severe weather, equipment issues, or planned maintenance. In those first few moments, knowing what to do can help keep you safe and reduce unnecessary stress.**

Before calling McLeod Co-op Power, start by checking your breaker box. A tripped breaker is one of the most common reasons for losing power in part of your home.

Open your panel and look for any switches that are out of alignment or stuck between on and off. Flip the tripped breaker fully off, then back on. This quick reset often restores power right away.

In single-family homes, breaker boxes are typically located in the basement, garage, utility room, or sometimes outside. In apartments or condos, they're often found in a hallway closet or laundry area. If you're unsure where yours is, your building manager or maintenance staff can point you in the right direction.

If everything looks normal in your breaker box and you're still without power, you can also check with a neighbor to see if they're experiencing an outage too. If they are, report it to McLeod Co-op Power. While you wait for power to be restored, unplug sensitive

electronics to prevent damage from surges when power returns. Use flashlights instead of candles to avoid fire hazards. Keep freezer and refrigerator doors closed to help preserve food.

Being prepared is just as important as knowing how to respond. Keep a flashlight, batteries, and a portable phone charger in an easy-to-reach spot. A battery-powered radio can help you stay informed during longer outages, and having McLeod Co-op Power's contact information or app handy will make reporting issues quicker and easier.

### HOW TO CHECK AND RESET ELECTRICAL BREAKERS

-  **LOCATE YOUR BREAKER PANEL:** Find the electrical panel in a basement, garage or utility room.
-  **IDENTIFY THE TRIPPED BREAKER:** Look for a switch that is in the middle or "off" position, or shows a red/orange indicator.
-  **RESET THE BREAKER SAFELY:** Firmly switch the tripped breaker to the "off" position then "on."
-  **CHECK FOR RECURRING ISSUES:** If it trips again, unplug devices and call a qualified electrician.

## 2026 RATE ADJUSTMENT

As reviewed in last month's newsletter, beginning January 1, 2026, McLeod Cooperative Power will implement a rate adjustment affecting all members. After reviewing budgets and long-term financial needs, the Cooperative determined that an overall revenue increase of about 3% is necessary to continue providing safe, reliable service. Updated rates will appear on monthly billing statements starting in February.

Rising wholesale power costs remain the primary driver of this change. Nearly 60% of McLeod's annual budget goes toward purchasing power, and even small shifts in those costs have a major impact. Expenses for materials, fuel, and operations have also continued to increase.

A key update for 2026 is the new monthly Time of Day Demand (TODD) charge for Rates 2, 5, and 18, meaning all rate classes will now include a demand charge.

Members can learn more, view rate-class details, and access tips for managing demand at: <https://www.mcleodcoop.com/about/2026-general-rate-increase/>.

# SHUT OFF PROTECTION FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL

When a household member has been ordered into active duty, for deployment or for a change of duty station, some member-consumers may find it hard to pay their utility bills. Minnesota law protects these military personnel from shut-off if they cannot pay their utility bills in full.

## HOW TO APPLY

Contact McLeod Co-op Power at (800) 494-6272 for an application, and to make and keep a payment plan.

## PAYMENT PLANS

- If your household income is below the state median household income and you pay ten percent of your household's gross monthly income toward your gas/ electric bill; or
- If you receive energy assistance and you pay ten percent of your household's gross monthly income toward your gas/electric bill; or
- If your household income is above the state median household income and you make and keep a payment plan.

# COLD STRIKES QUIETLY. STAY PROTECTED.



Low temperature sensors detect freezing conditions and alert our 24/7 monitoring center before pipes burst.



**SECURITY SYSTEMS  
MADE EASY**

888.264.6380  
heartlandss.com

# BY THE NUMBERS | Q3 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 Third Quarter Unaudited Financial Report.



	2025	2024
Cost of Purchased Power	\$11,152,121	\$10,539,528
Other Operating Expenses	\$7,299,915	\$6,937,303
Total Cost of Electric Service	\$18,452,036	\$17,476,831



kWh's SOLD  
**118,529,117**

2024 Comparison: 123,612,585



**TOTAL MARGINS**  
**\$(35,568)**

2024 Comparison: \$(47,402)

	2025	2024
Operating Margins	\$(466,432)	\$(515,987)
Non-Operating Margins	\$430,864	\$468,585



**7,065**  
**MEMBER SERVICES  
BILLED**

2024 Comparison: 7,050

**AVERAGE kWh's**  
used by residential members



**1,336**  
**PER MONTH**

2024 Comparison: 1,299

## CEO MESSAGE

As we close out 2025, I find myself looking back at the road we have traveled together. When I do, it is impossible to miss the work that has filled our rear-view mirror all year long. The development of our 2026 Time of Day Demand (TODD) charge has been one of the biggest projects this cooperative has taken on in many years, and it has shaped much of our decision-making throughout the past twelve months.

We hit some pretty big financial potholes this summer, especially during June. It was a cooler month than usual, right up until the last week when the heat came rushing in and pushed our system hard. When our power bill arrived from Great River Energy, it almost felt like the car spun a little toward the ditch. We saw a very high demand charge, but we did not have the normal kilowatt-hour sales to help spread that cost out. We had been planning for negative margins in June, but the power bill made the pothole deeper than we expected. In fact, it was nearly twice what we had budgeted.

Looking ahead, TODD is going to be at the wheel in 2026, and that matters. TODD generates revenue in a way that more closely matches how our power supply costs come together. That helps us steer around those financial potholes instead of hitting them square on. Our members have been paying attention. We have talked with more members about TODD this past year than we have talked with about our other rate increases since 2020 combined. We appreciate those conversations, and we appreciate the thoughtful questions that have come with them.

But TODD is only one part of what fills the rear-view mirror. This year, both the board and our employees dedicated substantial time to building a new Strategic Plan to guide us over the next four to five years. It places a strong focus on finding practical ways to control costs, generate new revenue



**CEO RON MEIER**

from other sources, and develop programs that support our members with their energy needs. It reinforces our commitment to reliability today while preparing our electrical grid for the future.

As I continue to look in that mirror, I cannot help but see the people who share this ride. Our employees and our board members are in the car with me every day. I feel very fortunate to work with such a dedicated group. Everyone has a role in keeping this cooperative moving forward. Every day, they show up for our members and for each other. Without them, this car would have found its way into a ditch long ago.

From all of us at McLeod Cooperative Power, Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "R. Meier".



**LIKE US ON  
FACEBOOK**

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

## NOVEMBER 2025 BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

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

Highlights of the meeting included:

- The October outage report was reviewed, totaling 45 outages affecting 152 consumers.
- Manager of Finance Jakel reviewed the October financials.
- A motion carried approving Resolution 2025-11-01 Adoption of Rate 21.
- A motion carried approving Resolution 2025-11-02 Transfer of Uncashed Checks.
- Manager of Finance Jakel reviewed the preliminary 2026 budget.
- A motion carried approving the December board meeting date (DEC 18th).
- A motion carried approving Policy 5-1 Paid Family and Medical Leave.
- A motion carried approving Director Susan Anderson to attend the 2026 Power Exchange on March 6-11, 2026, in Nashville, Tennessee.

# NUCLEAR POWER: FACTS AND MYTHS

By Darrick Moe, President and CEO,  
Minnesota Rural Electric Association



**When people think about nuclear power, they often picture Homer Simpson dozing off in a control room or Montgomery Burns scheming to cut corners for profit. Pop culture has shaped that image but it couldn't be further from modern reality.**

For decades, nuclear energy has quietly powered Minnesota's homes and businesses with reliable, carbon-free electricity. Yet despite this proven track record, nuclear remains one of the most misunderstood energy sources. As Minnesota works to meet growing energy demands and bold carbon-free goals, it's time to take a closer look at the facts.

## **CLEAN AND RELIABLE — NO MATTER THE WEATHER**

Nuclear energy generates electricity by splitting atoms to produce heat, which turns water into steam to drive turbines, all without releasing carbon emissions. In Minnesota, nuclear is the state's largest single source of reliable carbon-free electricity, with the Monticello and Prairie Island plants running safely and steadily for decades.

While wind and solar are vital to our clean energy goals, their output depends on the weather. Nuclear fills the gap, providing dependable, always-on power when it's needed most. That's critical in Minnesota, where frigid winters and hot summers place heavy demands on the grid.

This reliability stabilizes costs, prevents outages, and powers key industries like farming, food processing, and manufacturing.

## **A SMALL FOOTPRINT, BIG RESULTS**

Nuclear energy is also remarkably efficient in its use of land. Producing 1 million megawatt-hours of electricity requires about 17,800 acres of wind installations or 3,200 acres of solar panels. Nuclear can achieve the same output on just 103 acres.

For Minnesotans who care about preserving farmland, forests, and open space, that's a meaningful difference. Nuclear allows us to meet electricity needs without sprawling across productive or scenic land.

## **ADDRESSING SAFETY AND WASTE**

Safety is a reasonable concern with any energy source, and nuclear is no exception. The good news: U.S. nuclear plants are among the most heavily regulated energy facilities in the world. With built-in safety systems and decades of

experience, nuclear has one of the strongest safety records in the industry.

Waste is another common concern. Yet all used fuel from U.S. reactors since the 1950s would fit on a single football field, stacked less than 10 yards high. That waste is securely stored and monitored and has caused zero harm to the public.

To put it in perspective: waste from one person's lifetime of electricity use would fit inside a soda can.

## **LOOKING AHEAD: EVERY TOOL ON THE TABLE**

No energy source is perfect. Building new nuclear plants takes time, investment, and careful planning. But if Minnesota hopes to meet future energy needs affordably while reducing emissions, nuclear deserves to be part of the conversation.

State law currently prohibits utilities from even exploring new nuclear projects. Lifting that moratorium wouldn't build a plant tomorrow but it would allow for thoughtful discussions, research, and planning.

At the Minnesota Rural Electric Association, we believe in an "all-tech-on-deck" approach to energy. That means supporting innovation in wind, solar, battery storage, and nuclear alongside other tools that ensure affordable, reliable power for all Minnesotans.

Our energy future depends on practical solutions that strengthen the economy, protect the environment, and keep Minnesota powered in every season. With nuclear on the table, Minnesota can lead the way in building an energy system that serves our communities today and creates a brighter tomorrow.

The Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) is a nonprofit trade association serving Minnesota's electric cooperatives. MREA provides legislative and regulatory representation, director and employee education programs, technical training for electric cooperative line workers, and serves as the focal point for cooperation among cooperatives. Minnesota's 44 distribution cooperatives serve about 1.7 million Minnesotans in all 87 counties and operate the largest distribution network in the state with more than 135,000 miles of electric lines.

# POWER THEFT CASE

This announcement pertains to a criminal case filed in Carver County regarding a power theft case. Last year, McLeod Co-op Power received a tip that a member had altered the system to divert power to the member's property. We contacted Carver County based on our initial findings supporting this claim. Carver County prosecuted the case, resulting in the individual pleading guilty to the charges. The sentencing included paying restitution to our Cooperative for our losses.



## UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFO

At McLeod Co-op Power, data drives our operations, and we need your help to ensure its accuracy. By providing your most current and complete contact information, we can continue delivering the reliable, high-quality service you expect. Accurate information helps us improve customer service, enhance communication, and efficiently report and repair outages. It also allows us to keep you informed about essential programs, events, and activities.

Up-to-date contact details can significantly speed up power restoration during an outage. The phone number you provide links your service address to our outage management system. When you call to report an outage, our system identifies your phone number, matches it to your account, and predicts the outage's location and cause. This information streamlines the process, helping our crews address issues more efficiently.

While we strive to maintain uninterrupted service, planned outages occasionally occur for equipment updates, repairs, or replacements. With your updated contact preferences, we can notify you in advance. Additionally, accurate information allows us to reach you if questions arise about your energy use or billing.

Your contact information is kept private and used solely by McLeod Co-op for essential communications. Please update your details by calling us at (800) 494-6272 or logging into your SmartHub account. Thank you for helping us serve you better!



## POWER WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST

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

McLeod Co-op Power offers a "turn-key" sale and installation of fully automatic standby generator systems.

- Residential
- Farm
- Business
- 12-200 KW
- Turn-Key Installation
- Annual Maintenance

An automatic generator can operate your sump pump, furnace fan, lights, refrigerator, and more. McLeod Co-op Power sells and installs automatic generator systems by Briggs and Stratton. We also offer an annual maintenance program for generators.

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

## SMART SOLUTIONS FOR A SAFER, MORE EFFICIENT HOME THIS YEAR



In today's wired world, protecting your electronics and curbing wasted energy is easier than ever.

Surge protectors and advanced power strips each have their place but, for true peace of mind, you might even use both. Think of surge protectors as a protective shield for your electronics. When lightning strikes, the power grid hiccups, or faulty wiring sends a jolt through your outlets. This is when a surge protector steps in to protect your valuable devices.

How does it work? Inside every surge protector is a special component that diverts dangerous excess voltage safely away from your devices when a power spike hits, protecting everything from your computer and TV to your game console.

### WHY YOU'LL LOVE A SURGE PROTECTOR:

- Protects sensitive gear from power surges
- Helps avoid costly repairs or replacements
- Some models come with bonus safety features like circuit breakers.

Now we'll move onto what makes advanced power strips (also known as smart power strips) different. While many have built-in surge protection, their most important job is cutting down on the energy used by devices even when they're switched off, also known as "vampire power."

### WHY YOU'LL LOVE AN ADVANCED POWER STRIP:

- Kills standby power, saving you money and shrinking your carbon footprint
- Makes energy savings effortless and automatic
- Often includes surge protection for all-in-one value
- Great for homes, offices, classrooms and anywhere with multiple devices.

Many advanced power strips come with built-in surge protection, giving you the best of both worlds. And, what's better: You can purchase them, along with other energy-saving products, through our online store at [energywisemnstore.com](http://energywisemnstore.com).

## HOLIDAY DEALS IN THE ENERGY WISE MN STORE



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

### Looking to boost safety and save energy this winter?

Energy Wise MN is offering special holiday pricing on smart thermostats and other energy-saving products. It's the perfect time to upgrade your home's efficiency.

In addition to surge protectors and advanced power strips, you'll find ENERGY STAR® smart thermostats, LED lighting, and more tools designed to help cut waste and protect your home's electronics.

These limited-time thermostat deals won't last long, so be sure to explore the full selection at [www.energywisemnstore.com](http://www.energywisemnstore.com) and give yourself the gift of comfort and savings all year long.



## SCORE BIG WITH PAPERLESS BILLING AND AUTOMATIC PAYMENTS

*It's time to make the winning play with your McLeod Co-op Power account. Going paperless and setting up automatic payments isn't just a smart move for your routine, it's a win for your wallet, your co-op, and your community.*

*At McLeod Co-op Power, we know life moves fast and so does your mailbox. Going paperless is an easy way to stay organized and keep your account right at your fingertips. You will receive a bill notification through SmartHub, so it's secure, convenient, and always on time. No huddle required.*

Want to take your game plan up a notch? Set up automatic payments through ACH bank draft. Your payment is made straight from your bank account each month; safe, simple, and dependable. You'll never have to rush to beat the due date or worry about late fees.

Make the winning play today, visit [www.mcleodcoop.com/billing-options](http://www.mcleodcoop.com/billing-options) to go paperless and sign up for automatic payments.

### OFFICE PHONE

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

### 24-HOUR OUTAGE PHONE

(800) 927-5685

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is an equal opportunity  
employer and provider.**



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

To maximize your fireplace's efficiency, always keep the damper closed when the fireplace is not in use. An open damper is like an open window, allowing warm indoor air to escape and cold air to enter. Consider installing a fireplace insert, which improves heat output by circulating warm air into the room rather than letting it escape up the chimney. Also, burn only seasoned hardwood to ensure a hotter, cleaner burn. Regularly clean and inspect your chimney to maintain safe and efficient operation.



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## KEEP THE CHEER, SAVE THE ENERGY

The holidays are a busy season for cooking, decorating, and gathering; which can also lead to higher energy use. A few simple steps can help keep your home comfortable and your bills manageable.

### TRY THESE EASY EFFICIENCY TIPS:

- Use LED holiday lights. They use up to 80% less energy and stay cooler to the touch.
- Put décor on timers. Set indoor and outdoor lights to turn off automatically.
- Bake in batches. A warm oven uses the same energy whether it's cooking one dish or several.
- Lower the thermostat when hosting. Extra people and cooking naturally warm your home.
- Unplug when possible. Chargers and small appliances still draw power when not in use.
- Seal drafts. Check windows and doors to keep warm air in and chilly air out.
- Use your slow cooker or air fryer. They use less energy and help keep your kitchen cooler.

**Small changes add up to help you enjoy a cozy, energy-smart holiday season.**



# Holiday Cheers

**Merry Christmas and  
Happy New Year from all of us  
at McLeod Cooperative Power.**

The McLeod Co-op Power offices will be closed December 24, December 25 and January 1 for the holidays. In the event of an outage, please call (800) 927-5685.