

## Member Appreciation Days

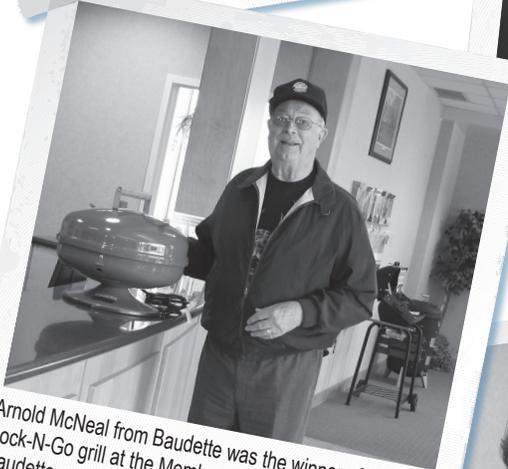
*We were pleased with the turnout at our seventh annual Member Appreciation Days. We had 21 kids and 196 adults register at Baudette and 17 kids and 93 adults register at Littlefork for a total of 327. The winners of the electric cart grill were Chrissy Jonelis at Baudette and Amos Layman at Littlefork. The Lock-N-Go grill winners were Arnold McNeal at Baudette and Kayla Reller at Littlefork. The winners of the \$25 gift card for the kid's drawing were Jaylin Raschke at Baudette and Abby Hauner at Littlefork.*



Members kept the linemen busy cooking and serving brats at Baudette.



Members registered for prizes at Baudette.



Arnold McNeal from Baudette was the winner of the Lock-N-Go grill at the Member Appreciation Days at Baudette.



Abby Hauner was the lucky winner of the \$25 gift certificate for the kid's drawing at Littlefork.



Chrissy Jonelis from Williams was the winner of the electric cart grill at the Member Appreciation Days at Baudette.



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner  
For energy-saving ideas go to [togetherwesave.com](http://togetherwesave.com).

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Visit our Website at  
[www.northstarelectric.coop](http://www.northstarelectric.coop)

North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
**Mission Statement**

*To improve the lives of our member-owners and community by responsibly providing electric energy and other beneficial services while maintaining the very highest standards of performance.*

•••• Current electrical inspectors ••••

State law requires that every new electrical installation in any construction, remodeling, replacement or repair shall file a certificate for inspection with the State Board of Electricity and be inspected by a Minnesota electrical inspector.

• **St. Louis and Koochiching counties:**

Bob Orgon  
10111 Roosevelt Rd. S.E.  
Bemidji, MN 56601  
Phone: (218) 556-3829  
Fax: (218) 333-0451  
7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)

• **Roseau and Lake of the Woods counties:**

Scott Stenvik  
16409 State Hwy 1 N.W.  
Thief River Falls, MN 56701  
Phone: (218) 689-5406  
7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)

*Highlights from the* **BOARDROOM**

These are the highlights from the Board of Directors meeting held on May 12, 2010. The board acted upon usual, routine business and voted to donate 7.5 acres adjacent to the headquarters building to Lake of the Woods County to construct a building to lease to the Wadena technical college to extend their electrical line workers' training program to Baudette, to apply for financial assistance from the USDA REDLG (Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant) program to aid the county in this project, and to approve the IRS 990 form.

Staff reports were provided and included the installation of windows in the Littlefork shop, the June power plant tour, the North Star Knowledge Scholarship Competition results, energy conservation, Operation Round Up, the financial report, collections, meter changeouts, unclaimed capital credits, pole attachments, idle services,

the NOVA project, developments with the proposed extension of the Wadena electrical line workers' program in Baudette, fewer new services to be built, safety achievements, the work plan, road projects affecting power lines, right-of-way spraying, substation repair, outages, upcoming union negotiations, legislative activity and discussion in the Big Falls area regarding harnessing hydropower where turbines once existed.

Detailed minutes are available at the cooperative for member review. Regular board meetings are generally held the first Wednesday of every month (121-35-002-11, Mark A. Bailey). If you wish to speak with the board, or have an item that you would like to have placed on the agenda, please contact Manager Dan Hoskins at least one week in advance to be included on the agenda.

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Minnesota Legislative Mandate – 25 percent of electricity must come from new renewable sources by 2025.**

Wind energy is twice the price of our coal-fired electricity. Minnkota's contract with the wind producer requires Minnkota to purchase all energy that the wind turbines generate, regardless if we need it. The excess power is sold on the open market. With the economy in a slump and the overall demand for electricity reduced across the nation, the market for wind when the turbines are really spinning (not during peak time) has been half the purchase price that Minnkota is obligated to pay for the wind power. The half-cent Temporary Wind Energy Surcharge is a result of these losses over the last year. We are convinced this surcharge will go away as the economy recovers. Although the increased cost hurts now, we are also confident that getting into wind power early has allowed Minnkota to secure long-term contracts that will eventually become enviable as the price of new contracts rise for utilities not already onboard.

**Carbon tax, cap and trade, and/or EPA regulation or greenhouse gas (carbon dioxide) has not yet begun to impact your rates.**

We continue to represent our members and fight hard at the State Capital and in Washington D.C., to keep common sense and fairness in the legislation and regulations that are being discussed. We thank those of you who contacted your elected officials. Without your help, the voice of rural America would not have been heard, and these new taxes would likely have been passed by now.

The North Star Electric Cooperative annual meeting of the members is scheduled for Friday, Oct. 8, at Lake of the Woods High School. The Board of Director positions up for elections are **Districts 2 and 3 for a four-year term.**

Your district number is printed on your electric bill. If you are interested in a position on the Board of Directors, you may pick up a petition form at our North Star Electric Cooperative office in either Littlefork or Baudette.

Please be advised that each membership of the North Star Electric Cooperative is allowed one signature, and in the case of joint membership, only one signature is allowed. (A husband and wife are not joint members unless they have completed a joint membership application.)

### SECTION 3. QUALIFICATIONS.

All persons eligible to become or remain a director of the Cooperative shall:

(a) be a member in good standing of the Cooperative receiving electric service at the

member's primary residence in the district from which the director is to be elected prior to being nominated for director;

For purposes of these bylaws, "primary residence" shall mean the residence that is the chief or main residence of the person and where the person actually lives for the most substantial portion of the year;

(b) have voting rights within the district from which the director is to be elected;

(c) not be employed by, materially affiliated with or have a material financial interest in any director, individual or entity which either is:

(1) directly or substantially competing with the Cooperative; or

(2) selling goods and services in substantial quantity to the Cooperative; or

(3) possessing a substantial conflict of interest with the Cooperative;

For purposes of this section, the terms "material" or "substantially" shall be interpreted as constituting a minimum of 5 percent of a member's total hours of employment sales or income on an annual basis:

(d) not be an employee or not have been an employee of the Cooperative within the last three (3) years;

(e) not be a close relative of an employee, where as found in these bylaws

"close relative" means any individual who is, either by blood, law, or marriage, including step, half, foster and adoptive is either a spouse, child, grandchild, parent, grandparent, brother or sister.

(f) be only one, and not more than one, member of a joint membership; provided, however, that none shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold a

# Nomination Process for Director Election

*As approved, with a Bylaw amendment by the membership, the Nominating Committees will not be used to identify candidates for director elections. Anyone interested in running for the North Star Electric Cooperative Board of Directors should review the following information from the North Star Electric Cooperative Bylaws Article IV, Board of Directors, Section 3, Qualifications, as well as the new nomination procedure, Article IV, Section 5, Nominations.*

position of trust in the Cooperative unless all shall meet the qualifications hereinabove set forth;

(g) if a representative or agent of a member is not a natural person, i.e. a corporation, partnership, limited liability company, or similar, then the representative or agent designated as a nominee for director shall be an individual residing within the external boundaries of the district from which (s)he is nominated; and

(h) agree to regularly attend all board, annual and special members' meetings, and in no case have more than four (4) unexcused absences within a twelve (12) month period of time.

Nothing contained in this section shall affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the board of directors.

(i) Exceptions. In regard to the restrictive provisions of this section that are based upon close relative relationships, no incumbent director shall lose eligibility to remain a director or to be re-elected a director if, during a director's incumbency, a director becomes a first kindred relative of another incumbent director or of a Cooperative employee because of a marriage or an adoption to which the director was not a party.

(j) Disqualification. After the board of

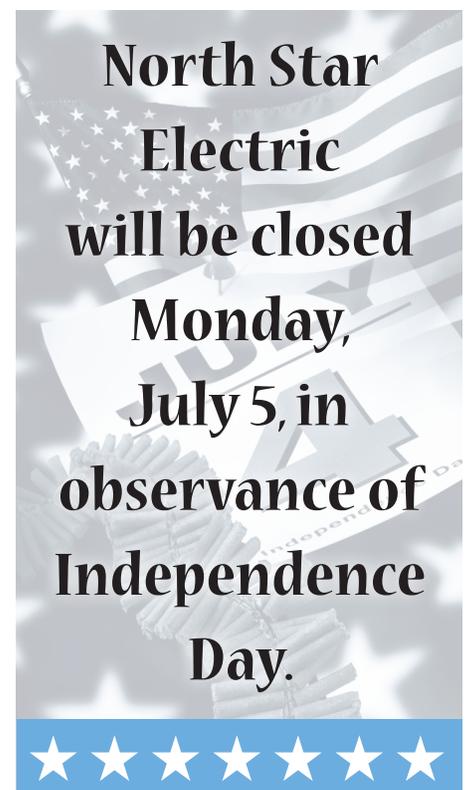
directors determines that a director or a nominee for director lacks eligibility under the provisions of this section or as may be provided elsewhere in these bylaws, it shall be the duty of the board to promptly make a disqualification. After the board of directors determines that any person being considered for or already holding a directorship lacks eligibility under this section it shall be the duty of the board of directors to withhold such position from such person or to cause a director to be removed therefrom, as the case may be.

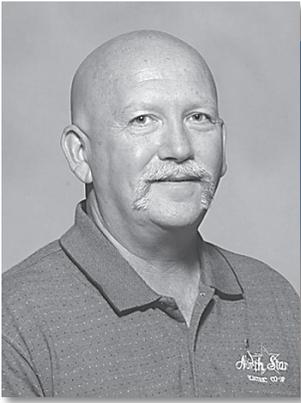
### SECTION 5. NOMINATIONS.

The procedures and methods of nominating candidates for election as a director of the cooperative are hereby established:

Nominations by Petition. Any twenty (20) or more members of a district of the cooperative may make nominations in writing over their signatures not less than sixty (60) days prior to the annual meeting, and the Secretary of the board of directors shall post the petition at the principal office

of the cooperative, Baudette, Minnesota; such listing of nominations by petition may be mailed to each member through the medium of the cooperative newsletter.





# Manager's Report

**Dan Hoskins**  
*General Manager*

Ladies and gentlemen, I have the greatest job in the world, but sometimes the most confusing of all. First of all, here is the great part of my job: managing a cooperative that buys, sells and distributes the greatest product in the world, electricity. Our cooperative is owned by 6,000 member-owners, directed by policies set up by an elected board of directors, and run by a team of individuals who are all professionals at what they do (383-12-002-02, Ronald E. Anderson). This all keeps it a viable business or cooperative. Well now, this is pretty simple if you ask me.

Now let's throw in a couple of twists. All of our costs are rising, from our fuel costs to material costs, administrative costs and regulatory costs. Then throw in an emission control upgrade to your wholesale power provider's coal-

fired power plant from the EPA to the tune of \$400 million. Next, a renewable energy mandate from our state level that makes you create a percentage of your energy production from renewable sources. Plus, a Conservation Improvement Program, also from our state, that says you have to conserve a percentage each year of all energy sales. Add this all up, and you got yourself a real twister. In one hand you are creating energy and the other hand you are conserving it! Oh yea, I forgot, keep the cost of the product at our lowest costs for our member-owners, all the while the wholesale energy rate is climbing at a record pace. Whew, next!

But, don't give up the ship yet. The greatest part is that we distribute this product right to your home or business and this makes your life so much easier and productive. That's why our mission is "to improve the lives of our member-owners and community by responsibly providing electric energy and other beneficial services while maintaining the very highest standards of performance."

Nowadays, our mission does

not go without your assistance, participation and understanding. Your assistance, because of your ability to get by with less energy due to conservation practices created mainly by rising costs and certain regulations to the energy industry. Your participation in our programs helps us control costs and be more efficient. And most notably, your understanding with the rising cost of electricity, coupled with the tough economic times, which makes us all watch our pocketbooks and make tough choices.

The one thing I hope doesn't happen is that we overlook our knowledge of the power of electricity and what it does for us. If you think about what costs you incur every month of different products and then compare them to each other, I am sure that you will find our product is head and shoulders above the rest.

Best wishes to all those fathers on June 20 and have a great Fourth of July celebration. Fun, but safe!

God Bless You and Our Troops,  
Dan

## Unclaimed capital credits donated to local nonprofit organizations



Jim Thompson accepts a check for the Grand Theater of Baudette from Mike Trueman, board member from District 2.



L.J. Anderson, board member from District 4, presents a check to Dave Gubbels for the new Lake of the Woods Ambulance transport vehicle.



Randy Bergan, board member from District 3, presents a check to the Williams Senior Citizens. Pictured from left to right are Randy Bergan, Velma Lund, Judy Senkyr and Nancy Jewell.

# Prepare your home to **BEAT THE HEAT** this summer

## Stay cool while spending less

**D**uring the sweltering summer months people nationwide crank up their air conditioners in an effort to stay cool. In the struggling economy, the Energy Education Council wants everyone to get the most for their energy dollars. Be sure your house is ready to beat the heat this year by following a few guidelines.

“Most of these suggestions require little effort or cost,” Energy Education Council Executive Director Molly Hall said. “The investment is well worth it with added comfort and savings.”

- Check the insulation. According to Energy Star™ insulation is usually measured using the R-Value. R-Value is a measure of insulation’s ability to resist heat traveling through it. The higher the R-Value the more effective it will be to beat the heat. The level of insulation recommended for your area can be found at [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov). If you are lacking the recommended insulation, you can add more right on top of the old insulation. However, don’t put a vapor barrier between the layers. Be sure the insulation doesn’t block vents or cover exhaust fans.
- Ventilate the attic. When the outside temperature is in the 90s, your attic can easily reach 140 degrees. Adequately sized vents and/or an attic fan can help keep hot air from building up.
- Get the air conditioner ready. Shut off power to the unit before cleaning it. On the inside, wash or vacuum cleanable filters; replace disposable ones. Outside, clear leaves and other debris away from the condensing unit. Hose off any accumulated dirt.
- Put a timer or programmable thermostat on your air conditioner. Leave it on a higher

temperature while you’re away, and set it to cool the house half an hour before you return home.

- Install awnings over windows exposed to direct sunlight.
  - Consider installing ceiling fans. On moderately warm days, fans can circulate enough air to keep you comfortable without air conditioning. Even on hotter days when you use the air conditioner, you can set your thermostat higher and save.
- “Even in summer, you don’t have to sacrifice comfort to stay within your budget,” Hall said. “Energy Education Council recommends a few easily achieved cost-saving tips.”
- Open windows and doors and let outside air cool your house on moderate days, and be sure to keep them closed when you’re operating the air conditioner.
  - Avoid unnecessary trips in and out of the house, especially on the most sultry days. Heat and humidity come in each time you open the door.
  - Keep the sun out of your house. Close blinds, shades or draperies during the hottest part of the day. Consider planting fast-growing trees and shrubs near your home but away from power lines, to provide shade.
  - Set lamps, TV sets and other heat-producing devices away from the air conditioner thermostat. Heat from the lamp could cause the thermostat to read a higher temperature and keep the air conditioner running more than necessary.
- “One secret to getting the best efficiency from your air conditioner is to be sure the maximum amount of air moves across the coils,” Hall said. “Make sure air can flow freely over the inside and outside coils.”
- Shut off power to the unit before

cleaning it. If you can reach the fan blades, be sure the power is turned off and then dust them – if they’re filled with lint, they can’t push as much air. If your air conditioner doesn’t give you as much cooling as it has in the past, call a cooling professional to inspect and tune it up.

If you’re shopping for a new unit, check the efficiency rating, or SEER. The higher the SEER number, the more efficient the air conditioner. Consider buying an Energy Star approved unit, which uses around 14 percent less energy than traditional air conditioning units for central air and at least 10 percent less for room units. Energy Star and local utilities are offering many incentives to upgrade appliances and insulation this year. Be sure to visit [www.energystar.gov/taxcredits](http://www.energystar.gov/taxcredits) and contact your local utility for more information.

“Like a car that gives you more miles per gallon, an air conditioner with a higher SEER gives you more cooling comfort for each energy dollar,” Hall said.

The Energy Education Council is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting electrical safety and energy efficiency. Safe Electricity is supported by a coalition of hundreds of organizations, including electric utilities, educators and other entities committed to promoting safe use of electricity.



# BACKUP GENERATORS COULD BE DEADLY

## Professional installation an important safety step

Portable generators may come in handy during long-term power outages. The growing popularity of portable electric generators has resulted in millions being placed in homes and small businesses across the nation. However, recent studies show that an overwhelming percentage may be installed incorrectly. As part of the “Teach Learn Care” TLC campaign, Safe Electricity urges consumers to understand the proper safety steps that must be taken. “A qualified vendor or electrical professional should be consulted to determine the best equipment for your situation or needs,” advises Mike Ashenfelter, electrical inspector and member of the Safe Electricity advisory team. “A reliable vendor will know existing safety codes and your utility’s safety requirements. If installed and operated correctly, use of a standby or portable electric generator poses little danger, but improper installation or use could be deadly.”

Properly connecting the generator into the system is a critical step for safe and effective use. A licensed professional should install a permanent, standby electric generator and can help with proper equipment for safely using a portable generator.

Have a qualified electrician install a transfer switch. The transfer switch breaks the path of electricity between the power lines and your main electrical panel. This is the best way to protect you, your neighbors and repair crews from “back feed.” Back feed occurs when an improperly connected generator begins feeding electricity “back” through the power lines (673-26-020-03, Marvin Kruskopf). It is your responsibility to take necessary steps to prevent the injury of anyone near lines, especially crews working to restore power.

“Safety for the operators and users of a generating system in the home and utility crews cannot be overemphasized,” says Ashenfelter.

Some homeowners choose smaller, portable generators to power essential electrical equipment during outages. Safe Electricity offers these tips for the safe operation and use of portable generators:

- **Read and follow all manufacturer operating instructions to properly ground the generator.** Be sure you understand them before hooking up the generator.
- **Maintain adequate ventilation.** Generators emit carbon monoxide. It is against fire code to operate a generator in your home, garage or other enclosed building. Place it in a dry location outdoors.

- **Never plug a portable electric generator into a wall outlet or connect directly to a home’s wiring.** This can energize utility power lines and injure you or others working nearby. Electrical back feed can also damage the generator and home electrical equipment.
- **Turn off the generator and allow cooling before refueling.** Gasoline and its vapors may ignite if they come in contact with hot components or an electrical spark. Store fuel in a properly designed container in a secure location away from the generator or other fuel-burning appliances, such as water heaters. Always have a fully charged, approved fire extinguisher located nearby.
- **Protect your appliances.** Turn off or disconnect all appliances and lights before you begin operating the portable generator. Once the generator is running, turn your appliances and lights on one at a time to avoid overloading the unit. Remember, generators are for temporary usage, prioritize your needs.
- **Generators pose electrical risks especially when operated in wet conditions.** Use a generator only when necessary. When the weather creates wet or moist conditions, protect the generator by operating it under an open, canopy-like structure on a dry surface where water cannot form puddles or drain under it. Always ensure that your hands are dry before touching the generator.
- **Keep children and pets away from portable generators at all times.** Many generator components are hot enough to burn you during operation.
- **Use proper extension cords.** Use only safety-tested, shop-type electrical cords designed and rated for heavier, outdoor use to connect appliances. Many generators are equipped with twist-lock connects to reduce the chance of accidental disconnections due to vibrations.
- **Shut down the generator properly.** Before shutting down a generator, turn off and unplug all appliances and equipment being powered by the generator.
- **Remember maintenance between uses.** It’s important to drain the gasoline from the generator while it is being stored. It’s also a good idea to inspect the fuel and oil filters, spark plug, oil level and fuel quality and start the generator on a regular basis before an emergency situation happens.

Safe Electricity suggests that these safety guidelines and basic operating instructions be posted in the home and with the generator. For additional electric generator and safety information, visit the program website at [www.safeelectricity.org](http://www.safeelectricity.org).

Keeping you safe all year is the goal of the Safe Electricity “Teach Learn Care” TLC campaign, an electrical safety public awareness program created and supported by a coalition of hundreds of organizations, including electric utilities, educators and other entities committed to promoting electrical safety.

# Get involved in the energy debate!



Now is the time to have a candid conversation with your elected officials. Start the conversation today at [www.ourenergy.coop](http://www.ourenergy.coop).

**Our Energy, Our Future**  
A Dialogue With America

*I would like North Star Electric to e-mail my elected officials and ask them the following four questions:*



## Capacity

Experts say that our nation's growing electricity needs will soon go well beyond what renewables, conservation and efficiency can provide. What is your plan to make sure we have the electricity we'll need in the future?



## Technology

What are you doing to fully fund the research required to make emissions-free electric plants an affordable reality?



## Affordability

Balancing electricity needs and environmental goals will be difficult. How much is all this going to increase my electric bill and what will you do to make it affordable?



## Jobs

How will you keep existing jobs and attract new businesses to Minnesota if our electric rates are higher than those in neighboring states?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Account number \_\_\_\_\_

## NORTH STAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE POLITICAL LEADERS

### Federal legislators

Senator Al Franken  
320 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
[www.franken.senate.gov](http://www.franken.senate.gov)  
202-224-5641  
Fax: 202-224-0044

Senator Amy Klobuchar  
302 Hart Senate Office Building  
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202-224-3244  
1-888-224-9043 (Minnesota office)  
Fax: 202-228-2186

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Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
651-296-0170  
888-682-3205  
[rep.tom.rukavina@house.mn](mailto:rep.tom.rukavina@house.mn)



## Problems paying your electric bill?

Energy assistance may be available!

If you are receiving a low income or suffering from a temporary financial shortfall, the following agencies may be able to assist you with your electric bill. We urge you to contact them immediately to avoid disconnection if you feel you are eligible for aid.

**Lake of the Woods County  
Community Services**  
P.O. Box G-0200  
Baudette, MN 56623  
634-2642

**Northwest Community  
Action Council**  
P.O. Box 67  
Badger, MN 56714-0067  
800-568-5329

**Koochiching County  
Community Services**  
1000 5<sup>th</sup> St.  
International Falls, MN 56649  
283-7000

**Kootasca Community  
Action, Inc.**  
2232 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. E.  
P.O. Box 44  
International Falls, MN 56649  
283-9491 or 800-559-9491

**Kootasca Community  
Action, Inc.**  
1213 SE 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave.  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744-3984  
800-422-0312

**Arrowhead Economic  
Opportunity Agency**  
702 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. S.  
Virginia, MN 55792-2797  
800-662-5711

## Citi Lites now marking consumer side power lines when necessary through Gopher State One Call



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

**H**omeowners need to remember that every digging job first requires a call to 811 at least two business days before digging to get utility lines marked – even small projects like planting trees and shrubs.

The depth of utility lines varies and there may be multiple utility lines in a common area. Digging without calling can disrupt service, harm you and those around you and potentially result in fines and repair costs. Calling 811 before every digging job gets underground utility power lines marked for free, up to your main meter.

Underground power lines from the main meter inward, however, are the responsibility of the member. In North Star's service territory, private lines beyond North Star's main meter (if the homeowner has them) are marked by Citi Lites for a fee. To contact Citi Lites, please call 218-568-4744. Their phone number is also listed on the locating utility flag marking North Star's underground lines.

Remember, before any digging project, large or small, you must call 811 to have utility lines marked. When you call 811, you'll be routed to the local Gopher State One Call center, where they will lead you step by step through the process and answer questions.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Use your microwave for cooking whenever possible. They use 50 to 65 percent less energy than conventional ovens and do not heat up your house in the summer. However, conventional ovens may be more appropriate for larger size items when cooking time is increased.



Source: Touchstone Energy Cooperative

## Enlightener online

We are getting a few requests that we no longer mail the *Enlightener* to homes or businesses of our members because the *Enlightener* is available on our website [www.northstarelectric.coop](http://www.northstarelectric.coop). The *Enlightener* is available on our website at the same time or before the *Enlightener* is mailed. Past *Enlightener* issues are also available at the same site. If this is something that you would be interested in doing, please fill out the form below and we will make the change for you. By reading your *Enlightener* online instead of us mailing you the paper copy would save North Star some publishing and mailing costs. Any questions, please give us a call at 634-2202 or 888-634-2202.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Account number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_