

Questions on load control?

Check it out on the Internet. Visit Minnkota's Web site: www.minnkota.com.

Member Service
NSTAR

Area Code
07

Last Transmission
11/28/07 09:44:37

		Double Order												
		09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
LOAD	1.01	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON
	1.02	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON
	2.01	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF
	2.02	ON	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	ON
	2.03	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON
GROUP	2.04	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON
	3.01	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON
	3.06	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON
	3.07	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON
	3.09	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON
UP	6.01	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON

Click on the "Load Management" button and then the "North Star" button. This Web page contains load control plans, the current state of the load management system, the last 30 hours of control and the last switching cycle. Your specific load group information is on the lower left hand corner of your electric bill. Please remember this is Minnkota's current estimate for controlling load. Control plans can and do change several times each hour.

Load groups starting with one (short-term heat control, water heaters and grain dryers) are for up to four hours of control. Load groups starting with two (storage heat) are for medium-term control up to 16 hours. Load groups starting with three (dual heat) are for long-term control.

Illustrated above is what Minnkota's Web site looks like for the current state of the load management system. All of load group 2.01 is controlled and double order 12, 13, 19 and 20 of load group 2.02 are also controlled.

Reliable backup systems a must!

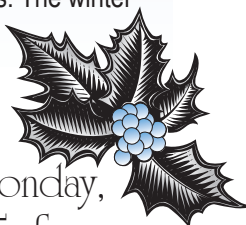
Because increased load control hours are predicted in the future, electric off-peak heating installations must be capable of 600 hours or more of interruption each winter season.

"In order to realize the full benefits of the load management program, it is very important that our members work with a qualified heating contractor to ensure that they have an automatic, adequate and well-maintained backup heating system," said Wayne Haukaas, manager of compliance and member services.

The electric off-peak heating program continues to provide great value to members today, just as it did when it was first utilized in the late 1970s. The winter heating season is here, and North Star Electric stands ready to assist our members with their electric home heating options.



North Star offices will be closed Monday, Dec. 24, and Tuesday, Dec. 25, for Christmas and Tuesday, Jan. 1, for New Year's



DECEMBER 2007

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1-888-6OUTAGE (1-888-668-8243)

or 634-2603

e-mail us at nsec@wiktel.com

Visit our Web site at

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.

Gopher State One Call



It's the LAW
CALL BEFORE YOU DIG
Minnesota Statewide One Call
Notification Center
1-800-252-1166

Highlights from the BOARDROOM

These are the highlights from the board of directors meeting held on Nov. 14, 2007.

The board acted upon usual, routine business. In addition, they voted to approve a cost-neutral change for employee life insurance, to transfer funds earmarked for a trailer to be used to purchase an upgraded used chipper for right-of-way maintenance, to support Red River Valley Cooperative Power Association's defense of their service territory, to select delegates for 2008, and to approve the 2007 Electric Load Forecast Study.

Reports from staff included the September financial reports, a good response from members signing up for automatic bill payment, personnel, load control, Operation Round Up, improvements to the Co-op Connections Card, legislative issues, new uncontrolled loads being added to the Minnkota system for ethanol plants and pipeline pumping stations, consideration of modifying the wholesale rate structure to address the concern of new large loads adding stress to the limited power supply, training, the AMR

(automated meter reading) system, the proposed neutrino capturing facility on the Ash River Trail, right-of-way maintenance, MREA dues, and wrap up of the annual meeting review.

The audit report was thoroughly reviewed with Auditor Dale Kuntz. The 2008 Operating Budget was presented.

Minnkota delegate Arnesen reported on their recent board meeting and that scheduled plant maintenance on Young 2 is lasting longer than planned. Plans for a new coal-fired electric-generating plant in North Dakota, Young 3, are meeting difficulties due to the anti-coal political climate in Minnesota. Reports from other meetings were provided.

Detailed minutes are available at the Cooperative for member review. Regular board meetings are generally held the first Wednesday of every month. 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.

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) 751-3535

7:00 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

7:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)

Members' corner

We are adding a section called the members' corner. What we would like is for members to send in questions about your electric Cooperative, and we will answer them for you. Please give us your name and a phone number in case we need to clarify the question, and send them to North Star Electric, PO Box 719, Baudette, MN, 56623, Attn: Wayne.



Dan Hoskins, General Manager

"Because of the slowdown of new services and upgrades, our crews did more along the line of maintenance and system replacements."

2007 in the mirror

Well, I can't see spring season's taillights in my rearview mirror any longer, and the summer season taillights are getting dimmer all the time, fall season is right beside us and ready to pass, and I can see winter season's headlights approaching us in the distance, and they are coming toward us very fast. Then we ask, "Where did the year go?" All I can say is that most of it is behind us, but I do believe your Cooperative had a good year, and here are just a couple of reasons.

Although new service construction was down in numbers and service upgrades are also down, the outage numbers were up a little, but the good news is that the outage hours per consumer dropped considerably. Now what does that mean; well, it means that, because of the slowdown of new services and upgrades, our crews did more along the line of maintenance and system replacements.

Although the number of outages was up, a lot of the outages that you experienced were planned outages for cutting over new power lines that were installed to replace old failing underground lines or upgrading existing overhead power lines to give you better reliability. We upgraded or replaced approximately 17 miles of line this year.

The maintenance was the general upkeep of our power lines, and this, too, has some scheduled outages associated with it, plus tree trimming and reclaiming of our rights of way. We know that there is still a lot of right of way to maintain out there, and if you take a minute to look around, you will see that we have trees everywhere, but we will continue our quest. I must say, this has been a total effort by our crews, and their efforts have helped cut the outage times down and that will continue, so if you see any

of our crews, be sure to thank them. It's their hard work that makes the difference.

Well, since you will probably receive this about the third week in December, I hope everyone has already prepared for the winter heating season! Have you done all the necessary things to the heating system in your home and checked around the house for things that can help you during this season? Load control hours this coming heating season should not be too bad; let's re-phrase that, load control hours this heating season are an unknown, but Minnkota Power Cooperative, our generation and transmission co-op, has estimated around 300 - 375 hours of load control this year, and as much as

we appreciate their efforts in forecasting, I think we will just have to use the old "wait and see" approach.

On another note, I would like to congratulate the football teams and the coaches of the Lake of the Woods Bears and the Littlefork/Big Falls Vikings for their outstanding seasons that included a great showing in the playoffs. The efforts you made make you one of the elite eight of the state! Congratulations!

That's it for now, and here's wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

God Bless you and our Troops,
Dan

North Star welcomes newest employee



Robyn Sonstegard

We are very pleased to introduce you to Robyn Sonstegard. She has just been hired as our Assistant Billing Coordinator in preparation for the Jan. 1, 2008, retirements of Lynette Dostall, who will continue to work part time, and Norma Anderson. Although Robyn's title suggests that she will work only with electric bills, one of her first tasks will be to work with our accountant during the computer conversion just getting under way, as Robyn will also be backup for Betty Jo, who is not far from retirement herself.

Robyn brings the mix of education and on-the-job experience we were looking for. She is also a CPA (certified public accountant) and is active in the community. Robyn and her husband, John, have three children: Jordan (8), Griffen (5), and Kayman (1). She also likes to spend time with her family and enjoys the outdoors.

Robyn hopes for economic growth and prosperity for our service territory, which will provide support to our schools, health system and way of life. She sees the opportunity, as an employee of North Star, to use her talents to serve the cooperative members, and community as a whole, to aid in the progress of achieving these goals.



Be prepared for ice storms and winter power outages

Winter brings with it many different kinds of hazardous weather: The extreme winter winds, unpredictable amounts of snow and rain, and fluctuating temperatures can result in severe freezing rain, sleet and ice storms.

In the event of an outage, be sure to:

- ✱ Stay inside and dress in warm, layered clothing.
- ✱ Close off unneeded rooms.
- ✱ When using an alternative heat source, follow operating instructions, use fire safeguards and be sure to properly ventilate.
- ✱ Stuff towels and rags underneath doors to keep the heat in.
- ✱ Cover windows at night.
- ✱ Eat. Food provides the body with energy for creating its own energy.
- ✱ Drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated.
- ✱ Move around to keep warm, but not enough to perspire. Perspiring causes the body to lose fluids, which could potentially lead to dehydration.

A heavy build-up of ice on power lines can cause wires to snap and utility poles to topple. Falling trees and tree limbs covered in ice can bring down power lines, cause outages and threaten property, even life. Safe Electricity stresses the importance of being prepared for these potentially dangerous storms and the power outages that they may cause.

“Having the right supplies and knowing how to stay warm safely are keys to weathering a winter storm emergency,” stresses Molly Hall, Safe Electricity Director.

“Severe damage to power lines and transmission systems may take days to repair,” says Hall. “In a winter storm emergency, restoring power and heat to consumers is the highest priority, and electric utility crews work around the clock to restore service.”

Sometimes winter storms arrive with plenty of warning and people are able to stay away from roads and hazardous situations, but severe winter weather can impact people in their homes.

Safe Electricity stresses that everyone, particularly families with special needs, must be prepared and know what to do in case of a winter emergency and long-term power outage:

- Always keep a battery-powered radio or TV, flashlights

and a supply of fresh batteries in case of an emergency.

- Know where to find extra blankets.
- Fill spare containers with water for washing, and keep a supply of bottled drinking water on hand.
- Keep a supply of nonperishable food items, along with a hand opener for canned food.
- During an outage, switch off lights and appliances to prevent overloading circuits and damaging appliances when power is restored. Leave one lamp or switch on as a signal for when your power returns.
- To prevent water pipes from freezing, keep faucets turned on slightly so that water drips from the tap.

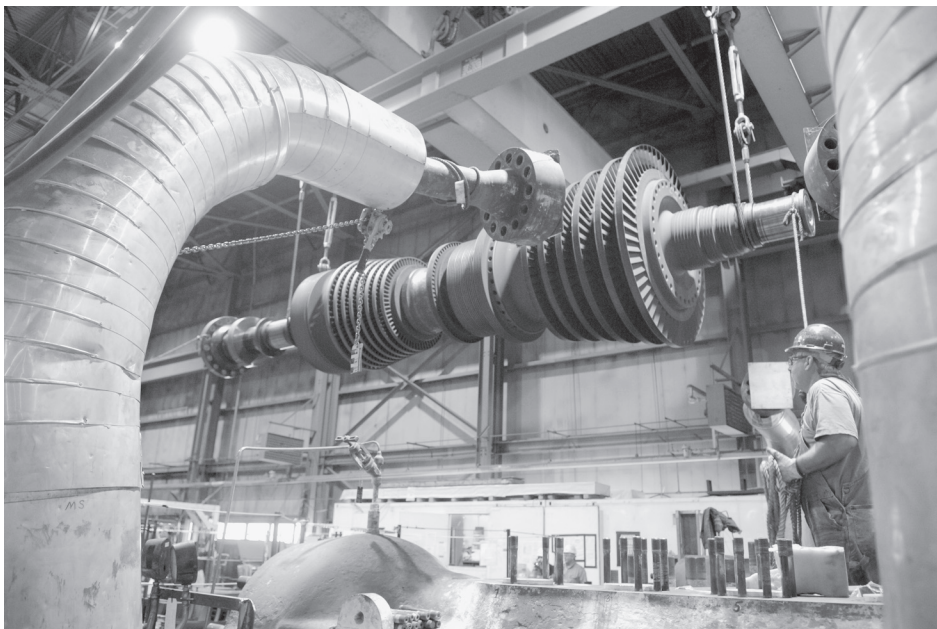
“Never use a charcoal grill to cook or heat with inside the home,” Hall emphasizes. “Charcoal grills give off deadly carbon monoxide gas. Grills should be used only outdoors.”

It’s a good idea to assemble a disaster supply kit that includes needed items ahead of time. Don’t forget to include a first aid kit, any prescription medications and any special items needed for infant, elderly or disabled family members.

Maintaining warmth is a priority during a winter emergency. Loss of body heat or hypothermia can be life-threatening. (393-19-001-04 Tim Miovac) If you use a standby generator, make sure it has a transfer safety switch or double throw disconnect switch before you operate it. This prevents electricity from traveling back through the power lines, or what is also known as “back feed.” Back feed creates danger for anyone near power lines, particularly crews working to restore power.

When outside, treat all downed and hanging lines as if they are active electric lines: Stay away, warn others to stay away and immediately contact your utility company.

For more detailed information and electrical safety tips, visit the **SafeElectricity.org** Web site. Safe Electricity is an electrical safety public awareness program created and supported by a coalition of several dozen organizations, including electric utilities and cooperatives, educators and other entities committed to promoting electrical safety.



Why so much load control?

- Milton R. Young 2, a 455-megawatt (MW) generating plant, was taken off line Sept. 6, 2007, for a planned eight-nine week major overhaul. Several major projects were planned in addition to routine maintenance on plant equipment. The major projects included re-winding the generator rotor and stator, a major turbine upgrade, replacement of a large section of boiler wall tubes and other boiler-related work.
- While the turbine and generator projects met the anticipated completion date, the boiler project did not. Labor shortages, primarily for boilermakers, caused the contractor to fall behind the completion schedule. Attempts were made to bring in more workers, with some limited success. But with the high demand for skilled boilermakers in

other areas of the region and throughout the country, the contractors were simply forced to work with fewer and less experienced boilermakers. Neither safety for the workers nor quality of the job was compromised, but the overhaul outage was not completed until 12 weeks had elapsed.

- Young 2 returned to service on Nov. 28. Minnkota remains confident that Young 2 will be more efficient and reliable as a result of the overhaul. However, a price was paid in increased load control hours for North Star Electric Cooperative off-peak members. Minnkota also paid its share, purchasing higher cost replacement energy during the three-week outage extension to meet its firm load requirements and a portion of the off-peak load requirements.

- Shortly after Young 2 returned to service, a major tube leak near the boiler roof forced the plant to be taken off line for slightly more than three days. Tube leaks are not new to the utility industry, and despite all of the maintenance precautions that are taken, they are generally unavoidable. There are 75 miles of boiler tubing in Young 1, and 125 miles in Young 2.
- Tube leaks are not weather related. They can, and do, happen at any time of the year as part of the process of turning water into steam in the boiler of a power plant.
- In normal operation, the temperature in the boiler reaches 3,000 degrees F. The boiler temperature has to drop to 120 degrees before Minnkota or contractor employees can enter it. At first, workers are only able to stay inside for 10 minutes at a time.
- A typical outage for repair, from the time the unit is shut down until it is restarted, ranges from 36-48 hours.
- Forced shutdowns like the recent Young 2 tube leak can be very expensive, and Minnkota does everything possible to avoid them.
- Nationwide, coal-fired power plants operate at generating capacity approximately 80 percent of the year. In contrast, the Young Station is available to generate electricity 90 percent or more annually. This percentage is based on a year in which a major maintenance outage does not occur.
- Minnkota is a winter-peaking wholesale power supplier, meaning the greatest demand for energy occurs during the winter months.
- Minnkota does not control off-peak loads to sell power into the wholesale market. Minnkota only controls loads to avoid purchasing expensive energy.
- During the extended Young 2 outage, Minnkota learned again the importance and value of the load management system. With wholesale power prices as high as 30 cents a kilowatt-hour (kWh), Minnkota controlled the off-peak loads and saved an estimated \$560,000 over the extended outage with approximately 35 hours of control.

North Star will no longer sell Steffes ETS heaters

North Star Electric Co-op has received notice that Steffes Corporation of Dickinson, North Dakota, has done a major change in marketing their ETS room units and furnaces. In the past, they sold directly to electric cooperatives, like North Star, and we sold the product to our members. Now, Steffes will sell to a wholesale distributor which will sell only to certified dealers. To find a certified dealer in your area, check Steffes' web site at www.steffes.com or call 1-888-783-3337.

East End News

Allan Baumgartner
Littlefork District
Operations Supervisor



North Star crews are finishing up the last of our new services for 2007. The total number of new services built will be very close to last year's number. The new ones we built this year will be good electric loads for our co-op. We also had a great year on both the west and east sides of our system for work plan projects. Our crews worked along with a contractor to complete eight different power line improvements throughout our system. Increasing capacity and replacing old power lines will cut down on outages and future problems for us.

Earlier in the year, our crews cleared our rights of way in the Big Falls and Kabetogama areas with our Bobcat and brush mower attachment. Throughout this summer, Hasbargen Logging cleared under power lines from Loman to Baudette; all together, close to 40 townships have been done so far.

This summer, we had all of our poles in the Birchdale substation area tested by American Energy Services. One hundred fifteen poles were rejected and will need to be replaced. Our crews have also been replacing poles for clearance problems near buildings and over roads.

If you see a low hanging wire or a severely leaning pole, please notify our office as soon as possible. Stay away from it! Our crews will be there quickly to take care of the problem.

ENERGY-SAVING IDEAS

Facts and tips from the U.S. Department of Energy

Do you have an energy hog in your basement or garage?

That old fridge may be costing you a lot more than you think

Millions of homeowners have an old refrigerator in their garage or basement, which is often a hand-me-down from the kitchen. These older refrigerators may still run, but can consume twice the amount of energy of a new energy-efficient model. At a time when homeowners are looking for ways to cut their energy bills, spending as much as \$125 a year to keep a few sodas or beers cold may not make sense.

In a home where the extra refrigerator is regularly stocked with food, replacing it with a new ENERGY STAR®-qualified refrigerator is an option to consider. You'll still save up to \$275 over the next five years, plus you'll get better performance. New ENERGY STAR-qualified refrigerators are available in a variety of sizes and price points, so you don't need to buy anything extravagant (some companies make refrigerators designed just for the garage).

If the extra refrigerator tends to be empty, or home to just a few batteries, stale sodas or mystery containers of food, you should probably get rid of it altogether. Think of all the extra space you'll have in your garage for storing equipment or tools.

If giving up your second refrigerator causes too much angst, consider opting for a smaller compact fridge. These units are smaller than a regular refrigerator, but can still hold extra sodas and other small items. They also use only a fraction of the energy of a full-size model. Look for one that



Is there an energy hog in your basement or garage? It could be costing you as much as \$125 per year.

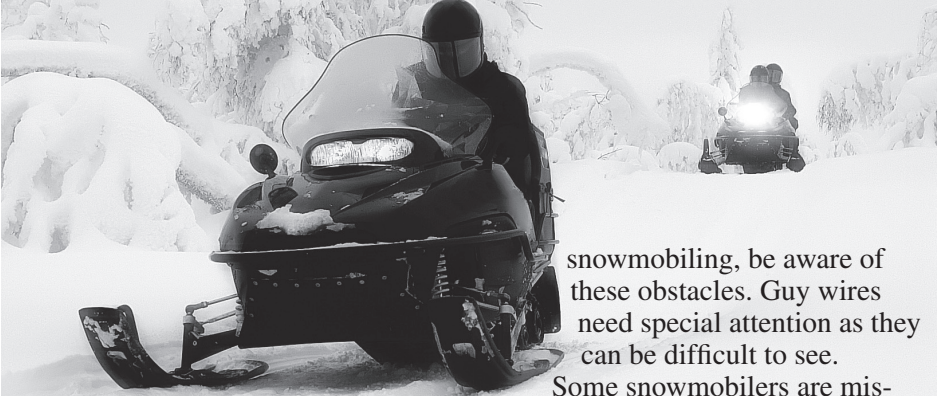
has earned the ENERGY STAR and save up to \$80 per year.

If a large amount of food storage is needed but only at certain times of the year, some families may find it better to keep the old model, but only plug it in when it is needed. (783-33-045-02 James Giggins) Leaving the old refrigerator unplugged for 10 months of the year can save as much as \$105.

To help consumers evaluate their choices, the U.S. Department of Energy now offers an online refrigerator retirement calculator, available at www.energystar.gov/refrigerators. This interactive tool allows homeowners to calculate how much it costs to operate their current refrigerator, and how much money they can save by retiring it or replacing it with one that has earned the ENERGY STAR.

❄️ Snowmobilers ❄️

Beware of hazards! Respect property rights!



As snowmobiling becomes more popular, the number of accidents are increasing. Very few accidents occur on Minnesota's trail system. Most accidents occur along roads and ditches. Obstacles encountered along roads and other cleared rights of way can be very dangerous, especially in low visibility conditions.

North Star Electric Cooperative and the other Minnkota Power Cooperative-associated systems have poles, guy wires, metal enclosures and pedestals installed on hundreds of miles of rights of way. When

snowmobiling, be aware of these obstacles. Guy wires need special attention as they can be difficult to see.

Some snowmobilers are mistaking the private property where electric transmission lines are located for snowmobile trails. North Star Electric and the other Minnkota-associated systems have been granted easements to build and maintain lines in these cleared areas, but the land still belongs to the landowner. Be sure to check with the landowners before snowmobiling on their property.

Enjoy snowmobiling in Minnesota, but keep safety in mind. Slow down, don't drink and stay alert for obstacles.

Extremely cold temperatures will affect the operation of your rented security light



If you notice a problem with your security light this winter, such as intermittent failure or it remains dimmer than normal, you're not alone. (654-32-021-01 Phillip J. Roux) Severe cold weather, specifically -10 degrees or colder, may seriously affect the operation of security lights.

The problem involves the formation of a gas in the bulb, which can be hampered by the cold. Usually, when the weather warms up, the lights will return to normal operation and will not have to be replaced.

If your security light is owned by North Star, we would appreciate it if you could bear with us during the coldest spells. If the light does not return to normal operation when the weather warms up, please notify our office and we will repair it for you (Baudette 634-2202, Littlefork 278-6658).



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 5th St.
International Falls, MN 56649
283-7000

Kootasca Community Action, Inc.

2232 2nd Ave. E.
P.O. Box 44
International Falls, MN 56649
283-9491 or 800-559-9491

Kootasca Community Action, Inc.

1213 SE 2nd Ave.
Grand Rapids, MN 55744-3984
800-422-0312

Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency

702 3rd Ave. S.
Virginia, MN 55792-2797
800-662-5711

Happy HOLIDAYS

from all of us
at North Star

Board Members

Steve Arnesen, President (District 1)
Bruce Polkinghorne, Vice President (District 7)
Mike Hanson, Secretary-Treasurer (District 5)
Julian Brzoznowski (District 8)
Mike Trueman (District 2)
L.J. Anderson (District 4)
Lorraine Nygaard (District 6)
Randy Bergan (District 3)

General Manager

Dan Hoskins General Manager 7-23-02

Office Personnel

Ann Ellis	Manager of Finance and Administration (B)	10-17-77
Betty Jo Berg	Bookkeeper/Asst. Office Manager (B)	4-3-78
Patsy Olson	Billing Coordinator (B)	1-1-87
Lynette Dostall	Receptionist/Cashier (B)	2-1-87
Kathy Hull	Work Order Clerk (B)	3-1-89
Susan Williams	Supervisor District Office (L)	4-4-90
Norma Anderson	Capital Credits & Billing Clerk (B)	1-1-03
Robyn Sonstegard	Assistant Billing Coordinator (B)	12-10-07
Carolyn Mastin	Part-time Receptionist (L)	

Compliance & Member Services

Wayne Haukaas	Manager of Compliance & Member Services (B)	11-14-88
Steve Polkinghorne	Member Service Advisor (L)	7-1-82
Kevin Holen	Member Service Electrician (B)	5-6-96
Jim Kuehl	Part-time Groundskeeper/Handyman (B)	

Line Crew

Allan Baumgartner	Operations Supervisor (L)	7-1-76
Steve Ellis	Operations Supervisor (B)	6-25-79
Bruce Petersen	Line Foreman (L)	6-27-78
Ron Lee	Line Sub-Foreman (L)	7-1-82
Gary Hull	Line Sub-Foreman (B)	7-1-82
Marty Mollberg	Line Foreman (B)	8-16-88
Todd Thydean	Lead Lineman (L)	9-12-88
Tim Pelach	Lead Lineman (B)	5-6-91
Rich Grotberg	Lineman (L)	7-1-96
Glen Marcotte	Lineman (L)	7-15-02
Dan Dobson	Lineman (B)	11-5-03
Todd Higgins	Lineman (B)	11-5-03
Matt Brown	Apprentice Lineman (L)	12-16-04
Brad Dolinski	Purchasing Agent/CAD Draftsman (B)	4-11-05

(B) signifies Baudette and (L) signifies Littlefork


North Star
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year!