

Supreme Court grants Minnkota, others stay in Clean Power Plan proceedings

On Feb. 9, the U.S. Supreme Court granted Minnkota Power Cooperative's and other petitioners' motion to stay the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan. In a 5-4 decision, the stay blocks the implementation of the rule until litigation has concluded. The state of North Dakota, where all of North Star's energy sources are located, has indicated it will immediately suspend work on its state plan to comply with the rules.

Oral arguments on the rule's legality are set for June 2, 2016, in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. A decision could come from the appeals court late in 2016 or early in 2017. The case is widely expected to then head to the Supreme Court for review.

North Star and Minnkota are pleased that the Supreme Court recognized the Clean Power Plan's immediate impact and halted its implementation. In the short term, the court's ruling will prevent North Star and Minnkota's other cooperatives, employees and consumers

at the end of the line from bearing the burden of the complex and far-reaching regulation.

North Star and Minnkota will remain active in legal efforts that protect the well-being of our members, while also working to create a viable future for all energy sources through reasonable and achievable solutions.

"It is very rare and significant for the United States Supreme Court to suspend an entire, wide-sweeping agenda of the executive branch of the federal government," North Dakota Gov. Jack Dalrymple said. "It has always been our position that the Obama administration has grossly overreached its authority in developing the EPA's emissions plan, and has not given real thought to the serious consequences to our national economy or to consumers' access to affordable electricity."

Stacey Dahl, Minnkota manager of external affairs, said the stay is unprecedented and an important legal victory.

"While significant hurdles related to the Clean Power Plan remain, the Supreme Court ensured the rule's legality will be decided on its merits first," Dahl said. "Many of the costs associated with the rule's implementation could not otherwise have been reversed."

John Graves,
Minnkota's environ-

(article continued on page 6)



North Star Electric Cooperative and Minnkota Power Cooperative

ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENTS

- Won national award for having nearly **30%** of our generation capacity coming from wind
- Removed sulfur dioxide emissions by **95%** at our coal-fired baseload plants
- Reduced nitrogen oxides emissions **60%** at our coal-fired baseload plants
- Removed mercury emissions **60%** at our coal-fired baseload plants
- Robust energy-efficiency programs
- Innovative demand response program to more efficiently manage existing power resources
- Have used electric water heaters for decades as environmentally friendly energy storage
- Installed solar demonstration project at our headquarters for members to see actual results in our region <http://egaug8199.egaug.es/>

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www.northstarelectric.coop

Members' corner

We added a section called 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.



North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc. Mission Statement

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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Highlights from the BOARDROOM

These are the highlights from the board of directors' Feb. 10, 2016, meeting. All board members were in attendance. In addition to routine motions, the board voted to approve the allocation of the 2015 margins (revenue in excess of expenses) to the cooperative members' capital credit accounts, to approve the early but discounted capital credit payments to estates, to approve travel for one staff and two board members to the Washington, D.C., NRECA Legislative Conference and one staff member to a cable plant tour provided by a materials vendor and to accept the notice of retirement given by Director Bruce Polkinghorne and recognize him for the 26 years of service he has given to the membership of North Star Electric Cooperative.

Staff reports included the financial report, year-end financials from 2015, sales tax refunds on capital and material purchases, a review of the 2015 Rural Utilities Service (RUS) Form 7, Operation

Round Up, pole changeouts, right-of-way clearing, the upcoming bidding process for summer work plan projects, hours worked without a lost-time incident, the aging underground cable servicing Norris Camp, a cellular pole attachment agreement, legislative issues and the stay granted by the U.S. Supreme Court on the Clean Power Plan (CPP), allowing time for litigation on core legal arguments involving the plan before compliance is required.

Board reports included an update from the Minnkota and Square Butte board meetings, as well as a report from MREA's Washington, D.C., visit with legislators.

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 Ann Ellis at least two weeks in advance to be included on the agenda.

Journeyman line worker job opening at North Star Electric

North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc. is looking to hire a qualified journeyman line worker. Requirements for a journeyman line worker to fill this position include a successful completion of a lineman's apprenticeship program and a current journeyman line worker certificate. You must have experience with overhead and underground electric distribution, including line construction, line maintenance and troubleshooting, rubber gloving voltages of 7,200 and 14,400 and a great attitude, personality and work ethic. A valid Minnesota driver's license with a CDL is required. Applications from apprentice line workers who have successfully completed a lineman's apprenticeship program will also be considered.

North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc. is headquartered in Baudette, Minn., with a service center located in Littlefork, Minn. This position is located in Baudette, Minn., and includes a current union compensation and an excellent benefit package. Pre-employment physicals and drug screenings are required.

An application form can be downloaded from www.northstarelectric.coop. Please mail, fax or email the document to Marty Mollberg, North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 719, Baudette, MN 56623. Applications will be accepted until 4 p.m., April 8, 2016. Please call North Star Electric Cooperative at 218-634-2202 with questions. Fax number: 218-634-2203. Email: martynsec@wiktel.com.



Ann Ellis
General Manager

MANAGER'S REPORT

Did you know?

The federal Energy Efficiency Tax Credit has been extended retroactively to include last year. If you have not already taken advantage of the \$500 credit, and

you made qualified energy-efficiency improvements such as additional insulation or installing Energy Star®-rated windows and doors, be sure to talk to your tax professional.

Water heater 'news'

It's interesting to read all the "news" about how electric water heaters on load control (off-peak) are hidden environmentally friendly batteries in basements across the nation. Let's rewind to 1977 – that's when Minnkota Power Cooperative began to offer members their cost-saving strategy that basically does just that – takes excess electricity no one can use at the moment it is generated and store it in electric water heaters and ETS (electric thermal storage) bricks or cement slabs for space heating.

Capital credits

With 2015 behind us, and because we are nonprofit, the board approved allocating last year's margins (revenue

in excess of expenses) to members' capital credit accounts. For every dollar you sent us, we ended up collecting 3½ cents more than the cost of service. This excess is now in your capital credit account, and we will temporarily use it to help finance system improvements of our electric distribution system.

Nearly every fall we return a portion of these capital credits. Our budget plan for this year is to return \$600,000. We also accept requests to settle estate balances.

Clean Power Plan

Representatives from North Star Electric Cooperative participated in the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's recent "Listening Sessions" to hear, and provide, public comments regarding the state's plans to comply with the EPA's Clean Power Plan (CPP). This is an important issue for Minnesotans. Please note the significant emissions improvements that we, as a member-owner of Minnkota Power Cooperative, have already made in the last decade. Please also remember this comes with a cost. With diverse concerns and viewpoints, it is important that we all work together to find the right balance.

At your service we remain,
Ann

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association has declared April 11 as **National Lineman Appreciation Day**

North Star Electric Cooperative is proud of our linemen and would like for everyone to take this opportunity to shake the hand of one of our linemen, a pat on the back or just extend a nice thank you greeting.

Our Linemen

Tim Pelach	Preston Kennedy
Bruce Petersen	Jesse Huot
Todd Thydean	Toby Wahl
Todd Higgins	Nick Horne
Darren Koschak	Nathan Zortman

'The Lineman'

What are their thoughts, these hardy souls, hanging by a belt on top of poles, doing a job few would do, what are their thoughts, this gallant crew? They risk their lives the whole day through, gaffed to a pole, these men of few, they battle the elements from summer heat to winter snow, fulfilling orders from afar and below?

These men of brawn who hum a song, also joke and swear to get along, knowing their life is probably, only a rubber glove from eternity? At the close of day, as they climb down the pole and put their hooks away? They thank God for their safe ability, to be able to return home to their family.

Then as they walk thru their door to greet their kids and their wife, today they know, they turned darkness into light. And one last thing before we end; God said, "let there be light," then he created linemen!



Staff Report

With another somewhat mild winter almost in the books, I hope you were able to get out and enjoy some ice fishing, snowmobiling and other winter activities.

Our line crews have been busy working on replacing rejected poles found during annual testing. The East end crews are wrapping up pole changeouts tested in fall 2014 out of the International Falls substation and the West end crews have been changing some of the 210 rejected poles found during fall 2015 pole testing out of the Pitt substation. Along with that, both crews have also been working on line and right of way



Marty Mollberg
Manager of Operations

maintenance. The contracted right of way clearing will be out of the Birchdale substation for 2016.

Work plan projects scheduled for this year are as follows: six miles of overhead three-phase line is to be upgraded from the Kabetogama substation going west to Ray on the south side of State Highway 53, and 6.5 miles of three-phase underground cable starting one mile east of Williams Range Line on the south side of County Road 8 going east to County Road 20 (Morris Point Road) will be replaced (Dan Ecklund, 131-15-005-02). If you have any questions or concerns about either of these projects, feel free to contact me.

With spring just around the corner, you can expect to see the linemen out during road restrictions month performing our annual overhead and underground line inspection. Also keep in mind that it is never too early to contact us about your plans for new service or service upgrades. Until next time, stay safe.

HOW TO SAFELY CLEAN UP AND DISPOSE OF BROKEN CFLS



Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs) are an affordable and efficient alternative to traditional incandescent light bulbs. CFLs last longer than incandescent bulbs,

require a fraction of the cost to use and lead to fewer carbon dioxide emissions.

CFLs do contain a small amount of mercury. To put it in perspective, you would have to break 100 CFLs to equal the amount of mercury in an old style thermometer, according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The level of mercury in a CFL is nothing to fear, but you should handle them with care. When you are done with a CFL, take it to an approved drop-off. Retailers, including many hardware stores, will properly dispose of CFLs if you drop them off.

If you break a CFL, follow these cleanup and disposal procedures:

- Do not vacuum the broken bulb – unless broken glass remains after all other cleanup steps have been taken – because it could spread mercury-containing powder or mercury vapor.
- Have children and pets leave the room.

- Before you start to clean up the broken bulb, shut off the heat or air conditioning to prevent the mercury from circulating. Then open a window, and leave the room for 5 to 10 minutes.
- Using a stiff piece of paper, sweep the broken pieces into a glass jar with a metal lid. Place the cardboard in a sealable container (jar or plastic bag).
- Use sticky tape, such as duct tape, to clean up the remaining pieces; put the tape in the jar. If the CFL broke on a hard surface, wipe it down with a damp cloth and place the cloth in the jar or plastic bag.
- If the CFL broke on carpet and you cannot pick up all the pieces, use a vacuum, but dispose of the vacuum cleaner bag when you are done.
- Be sure to place the jar or bag with broken bulb and cleanup materials outside in a trash container or protected area until it can be disposed of properly. Some recycling centers accept CFLs – but not all of them do. The EPA suggests checking with your local and/or state household hazardous waste authority for disposal requirements in your area.
- Keep the heating or air conditioning system off and continue to let the room air out for several hours.

For more information on energy safety and efficiency, visit EnergyEdCouncil.org.

Take note of power poles when planning a controlled burn



Properly controlled burns can have many benefits for agricultural land. However, if these burns are not managed safely, they can result in property damage, power outages, injury and even death. Safe Electricity urges you to make safety a priority and shares important information on the special considerations that need to be taken around power lines.

First, make yourself aware of laws and regulations. Burns should only be conducted by those who are experienced with fire and burn paths. Avoid burning near public roads or airports, as this can create a potentially dangerous visibility hazard. Alert all those who may be potentially affected by the burn, including neighbors, the local fire department and law enforcement. Depending on local regulations, you may also need to obtain a burn permit.

Take special note of power poles and lines. Burning a power pole could result in a widespread power outage and be costly for the individual responsible for the fire.

Cut down grass and weeds and water the area near the poles as to not encourage fires to encroach (Glenn Stoltman, 251-21-013-03). Be careful to keep water streams out of power lines.

If a power pole catches on fire, call the fire department and alert your utility to handle the possible electrical dangers. Even if you think you have been able to put out the fire yourself, alert the utility to the fact that it caught fire. The creosote, a preservative, on the inside could still be burning the pole from the inside out. In addition, if the pole catches on fire, it could create shock or electrocution hazards to those who may be nearby or spark fires in unintended directions from downed lines.

Carbon particles in smoke can conduct electricity, and it is also possible for smoke produced during the burnings to conduct electricity and cause an electrical discharge from the line. To reduce this risk, the fire should not cross under power lines.

Also keep environmental factors, such as temperature, humidity and wind direction and speed in mind. The wind speed in the area should be low and in a steady direction as to not let the fire get out of control. As environmental factors are subject to change, check forecasts as well as actual conditions before you begin the burn.

Ensure that you have the proper clothing, equipment and tools. For personal safety, all those near the flames should wear clothing made of natural fibers or approved for firefighting.

For more information on safety around electrical equipment, visit SafeElectricity.org.

ATTENTION: Parents of high school seniors



Are you aware of North Star Electric's Knowledge Scholarship? To qualify, the parent/guardian must be an active member of North Star Electric, and your child must take a test about your cooperative that provides electricity to your home. North Star Electric will award five scholarships, one \$1,000 and four \$400, plus a chance to win one of eight \$100 cash awards for scoring better than 60 percent on the test. Most of the answers will be in the study material that North Star provides. A few hours of study time could pay off with a \$1,000 scholarship. Last year only 26 students took the test. The information meeting and the test will be given in early April. For more information about the scholarships, please call Wayne at North Star Electric or check with a guidance counselor at your school.

Capital credit allocation

Your March bill will show your share of the 2015 margins (revenue in excess of expenses) and your accumulated capital credit balance. Because North Star Electric Cooperative is nonprofit and owned by those who purchase electricity from it, all margins are returned to you and the other members. Current margins are temporarily held in your capital credit account, which is your share of the ownership of the cooperative's assets. Over time, these capital credits are repaid to the members. Payment or bill credit are typically made in September. We have returned \$10,771,055 of capital credits to our members and hold approximately \$10,018,119.



LED lighting rebate form



ENERGY STAR® bulbs highly recommended
(Rebates will not exceed 75 percent of purchase price)

Complete this form, attach a copy of your purchase receipt
and mail to: North Star Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 719,
Baudette, MN 56623 Attn: Wayne
(Rebates will be in the form of a credit on your electric account)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone #: _____ Other Phone #: _____

North Star Electric Account Number: _____

Name of Retailer: _____

Replacing 40-60W bulb: (\$4/bulb rebate)
Number of bulbs: _____

Replacing 75-100W bulb: (\$8/bulb rebate)
Number of bulbs: _____

Supreme Court grants Minnkota, others stay (continued from page 1)

-mental manager, said it is a step in the right direction, but it's not a done deal with respect to winning the battle against the Clean Power Plan.

"Now with the unfortunate death of conservative Justice Antonin Scalia the final outcome of legal actions concerning the Clean Power Plan have become even more uncertain," Graves said.

U.S. Sen. Heidi Heitkamp, D-N.D., said she thought the ruling might go the way it did – at least in the short term.

"These EPA rules would disproportionately hurt North Dakota and were written without taking into account the unique challenges utilities face in our state," she said.

Scholarships available for Minnesota students interested in pursuing careers in cooperatives

The Minnesota Cooperative Education Foundation is pleased to announce the Edward Slettom Cooperative Leadership scholarships are being offered for high school, college, graduate and law school students interested in pursuing careers in cooperatives. The awards include \$500 for high school students and \$750 for college students attending a two- or four-year institution, as well as \$1,000 for students in graduate or law school. The awards are based on scholastic achievement, leadership and an ability to contribute to co-ops in the future. Applicants must be residents of Minnesota but need not attend a Minnesota institution of higher education. Please visit <http://www.mcecf.coop/scholarships>, call 651-209-8895 or email charlene.vrieze@cooperativenetwork.coop for application documents and eligibility information. The application deadline is April 1.



*North Star Electric
Cooperative offices
will be closed
Friday, March 25,
in observance
of Good Friday.*

Current electrical inspectors

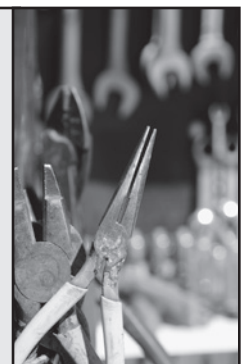
State law requires that every new electrical installation in any construction, remodeling, replacement or repair shall file a certificate for inspection and be inspected by a Minnesota electrical inspector. For more information go to Minnesota Department of Labor and Industries website (dli.mn.gov) and go to the electrical page.

• Lake of the Woods, St. Louis and Koochiching counties:

Curt Collier (cgcclier67@gmail.com)
Phone: (218) 966-5070
Call to set up an appointment between
7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)

• Roseau county:

Scott Stenvik
Phone: (218) 689-5406
Call to set up an appointment between
7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)



State law requires a carbon monoxide detector near every bedroom of your home

Each year, more than 200 Americans die and several thousand individuals are treated in emergency rooms for carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. The risk of CO poisoning increases during the winter, as more people run furnaces, gas space heaters and use fireplaces.

Remember – Minnesota law requires CO detectors within 10 feet of every sleeping room in all existing



single-family homes. If you haven't installed a detector yet, please don't wait. Lives may depend on it.

For more information go to www.dps.state.mn.us/fmarshal/PublicEducation or call the State Fire Marshal's office at 1-651-201-7200.

DIGGING SOON?



One free, easy call gets your utility lines marked **AND** helps protect you from injury and expense. Safe digging is no accident: always call 811 before you dig.

Visit www.call811.com for more information.

NORTH STAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE POLITICAL LEADERS

Federal legislators

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20500
www.whitehouse.gov
president@whitehouse.gov
202-456-1111

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
Washington, D.C. 20510
www.klobuchar.senate.gov
202-224-3244
1-888-224-9043 (Minnesota office)
Fax: 202-228-2186

Congressman Rick Nolan
2447 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
www.nolan.house.gov
202-225-6211
Facebook: US Rep Rick Nolan
Twitter: @USRepRickNolan

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State of Minnesota legislators

Governor Mark Dayton
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
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St. Paul, MN 55155-1606
800-657-3717
mark.dayton@state.mn.us

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Senator LeRoy Stumpf
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651-296-8660
Email: Use mail form

Representative Dave Hancock
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100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-4265
rep.dave.hancock@house.mn

Representative Dan Fabian
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St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-9635
888-727-0979
rep.dan.fabian@house.mn

Representative Rob Ecklund
311 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-2190
rep.rob.ecklund@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 Social Services
206 8th Ave. SE, Suite 200
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.
Grand Rapids, MN 55744-3984
Toll free 1-877-687-1163
Direct 1-218-999-0800
Fax 218-999-0220

Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency
702 3rd Ave. S.
Virginia, MN 55792-2797
800-662-5711

2016 power plant tour

June 28-30, 2016



BNI Coal Mine



Garrison Dam

dragline Liberty, with its 300-foot boom and 70-cubic-yard bucket, which is used to remove the overburden soil from the coal. Then it's off to see the Garrison Dam and tour the hydro-electric plant. We will end our day by returning to the Baymont Inn & Suites for supper.

On the third day we will drive by the Ashtabula Wind Energy Center near Valley City, N.D., and then visit the Infinity wind turbine by Petersburg, N.D. Some of our energy is generated at both sites. The wind towers at Ashtabula are 250 feet tall with 120-foot blades. After that we're off to Grand Forks for lunch and then back home. The cost to members is just \$100 per person or \$175 per couple, which covers the bus, hotels, tours and meals. Members who have not been on this trip in the past are encouraged to go.

We are offering all North Star Electric members an exceptional summer opportunity that's fun for all ages. This year's tour is three days, which will make the trip more relaxing.

The tour is scheduled for Tuesday through Thursday, June 28-30. On the first day we will tour Minnkota's control center and print shop in Grand Forks, and then it's off to the beautiful Baymont Inn & Suites in Mandan, N.D.

On the second day we will visit the Milton R. Young Station near Center, N.D., where most of our electricity is generated. This will include a tour of the open pit mines where machines strip the coal and reclaim the land so it can once again be used for agriculture (James E. Willemsen, 783-33-027-08). This is where we will see the huge electric



Milton R. Young Station

Power Plant Tour Registration Form

Names of Participants

Address

Telephone Number _____

Account Number _____

Number Attending _____

Have you enjoyed this trip in the past? N/Y What year? _____

Please print names of participants the way you would like them to appear on your name tags. Your deposit will be refunded if the tour is canceled or if you should find that you cannot make the trip. We will send further details prior to departure. Return with check for \$100 per person or \$175 per couple to: North Star Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 719, Baudette, MN 56623