

## Minnkota CEO meets with EPA Administrator



**M**ac McLennan, Minnkota president & CEO, and other electric cooperative leaders in North Dakota met with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt on April 25 to discuss issues vitally important to the industry.

"I'm grateful to Administrator Pruitt for his time and the productive discussion we had on rules and regulations that are of paramount importance to our membership," McLennan said. "Mr. Pruitt is well-versed on the issues impacting our industry and understands the important role electric cooperatives play in powering our nation's economy."

The meeting, held in Washington, D.C., was organized through U.S. Rep. Kevin Cramer and included representatives from the North Dakota Farm Bureau. Electric cooperative leaders emphasized the importance of certainty with respect to the long-term use of electric generation assets, the uniqueness of North Dakota lignite coal and the more than \$2 billion that has already been invested by the state's utilities in emission control technologies. Other topics discussed included the Clean Power Plan, coal ash rules, Waters of the United States, Regional Haze and New Source Review.

"Our ability to provide affordable and reliable electricity to consumers in the Upper Midwest is highly dependent on sensible, well-constructed regulations," McLennan said.

The meeting also included an invitation for Administrator Pruitt to visit North Dakota and tour the state's energy industry.

"I hope Administrator Pruitt will take us up on our offer to visit North Dakota and see firsthand how our state is not only a leader in energy production, but also in the development of next generation energy technologies," McLennan said.

The meeting was Pruitt's second with the nation's electric cooperative representatives since being confirmed to lead the EPA by the U.S. Senate on Feb. 17. He visited a Missouri-based cooperative's coal-based power plant on April 20 to discuss the agency's "Back to the Basics" regulatory approach.

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JULY 2017

The Enlightener (USPS 024959), Vol. 62, No. 6 is published monthly by North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc., 441 St. Hwy 172 N.W., Baudette, MN 56623-0719. Subscription price \$1/year. Periodicals postage paid at Baudette, MN 56623. POSTMASTER: Send address corrections to The Enlightener, North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 719, Baudette, MN 56623-0719.

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Littlefork ..... 218-278-6658 or 888-258-2008

For credit card payment, call 855-874-5354.  
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[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 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.*

## 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.**

# Nomination process for director election

The North Star Electric Cooperative annual meeting of the members is scheduled for Friday, Oct. 6, at Littlefork/Big Falls School. The Board of Directors positions up for election are **District 5 and 6 for a four-year term.**

Your district number is printed on your electric bill. If you live in one of these districts and 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 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 the member is nominated;

(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; and

(i) not have been convicted of a felony.

(j) **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.

(k) **Disqualification.** After the Board of Directors determines that 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.

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.

## SECTION 5.

### NOMINATIONS.

The procedures and methods of nominating candidates for election as a director of the cooperative is by nomination 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

**Ann Ellis**  
General Manager

got it across the finish line (658-13-007-03, James Reid). This bill makes it clear that local rural electric cooperative boards can effectively resolve member disputes. North Star Electric Cooperative's seven directors, who you and the other 5,348 member-owners elect to represent you, can achieve this in a timely manner and at a significantly reduced cost.

To dot the "i's" and cross the "t's" we will schedule a special meeting this fall so members can share any comments they have about the board's intent to assume this authority from the PUC.

## Local Democracy bill passes

After a roller coaster ride, starting with overwhelming bipartisan support in the House and Senate, then a veto by the governor, our local legislators kept our Local Democracy bill alive and

strategic initiatives that align with our mission which, in its abbreviated form, is to improve your life. If you have thoughts about the direction of your co-op, please share them with us.

## Annual meeting

I know it's early, but have you marked your calendar for Friday, Oct. 6, to attend North Star Electric Cooperative's annual meeting? It will be in Littlefork this year to coincide with the director elections in Districts 5 and 6. We have a new prize planned. For members who bring their children

***For members who bring their children (birth to college age), those future college/trade-school students will be eligible for the special drawing for a \$500 college savings account.***

(birth to college age), those future college/trade-school students will be eligible for the special drawing for a \$500 college savings account. We continue to look for ways to encourage younger members to become more aware of the benefits of buying from their co-op. We hope

adding this scholarship to the list of prizes helps fill more seats at the annual meeting, which gives us a chance to update more member-owners about how their business is running, as well as make a connection with our future member-owners. Are you flipping (or swiping) to October on your calendar yet?

## Thank you

Finally, for everyone who was able to join us for Member Appreciation Days, thank you for coming! It was great to see you, and we are always happy to answer your questions because ...

... at your service we remain,  
Ann



**Sen. Tom Bakk**  
District 3



**Rep. Dan Fabian**  
District 1A



**Rep. Rob Ecklund**  
District 3A



**Rep. Matt Grossell**  
District 2A



**Sen. Mark Johnson**  
District 1



**Sen. Paul Utke**  
District 2

*North Star Electric Cooperative appreciates for the work our six area legislators do on the cooperatives' behalf. They work together to accomplish good things and are responsive to our concerns.*

## See you at the fair!

What is your favorite part of the fair? The rides, the food, the exhibits, North Star Electric Cooperative's booth? We will have information at both the Littlefork Northern District Fair (July 6-9) and the Lake of the Woods County Fair (July 12-15) to share money-saving ideas, which includes ASHP (air-source heat pumps) that both cool and heat your home at 300 percent efficiency. Be sure to stop by to visit with us about how we can help you get even more value from your electric service.

## Strategic planning

Later this month your board of directors will be taking its annual day to step out of the norm and discuss potential



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

**North Star Electric Cooperative and Touchstone Energy Cooperative are partners in power. Together we are an alliance of 900 rural electric cooperatives across the nation who adhere to these four values:**

**INTEGRITY | ACCOUNTABILITY |  
INNOVATION | COMMUNITY**

# Member Appreciation Days



We were pleased with the turnout at our 15<sup>th</sup> annual Member Appreciation Days. In Littlefork we had 134 members register and 29 kids, and in Baudette we had 197 members register and 48 kids. Winners of the cart grill/roisserie and cover were David Neset in Littlefork and Darlene Ney in Baudette. The Lock-N-Go grill winners were Mary Moe in Littlefork and Marj Hancock in Baudette. For the kids' drawing, the scooter winners were Cody Reller in Littlefork and Kinley Lucek in Baudette.





## Avoid HAZARDS with grain bins and power lines



Electrical power is an indispensable part of modern agricultural operations. In fact, electricity is such a commonplace part of a farm operation that it can all too easily become a part of the scenery and its hazards overlooked. One

often overlooked safety consideration is the power line clearance required for grain bins. Safe Electricity provides tips on avoiding electrical hazards around the farm, including the construction of grain bins.

Electrical hazards include large equipment and farm structures near overhead power lines. The best way to avoid problems is to keep equipment and new constructions a safe distance from power lines.

Equipment and vehicles, such as augers and grain trucks, around grain bins are particularly at risk of coming into contact with overhead power lines. It is important that bins be built a safe distance from power lines to help ensure the safety of all farm workers.

The National Electrical Safety Code sets the minimum distance that power lines must be above and around grain bins (252-13-029-02, Grant Pytkas). Your state and utility may have additional requirements. If planning on constructing a new grain bin, contact your local utility before any construction begins. They can help you determine minimum safety requirements.

Keep these additional safety tips in mind anytime you are operating large farm equipment around power lines:

- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from lines – at all times, in all directions.
- Inspect the height of the farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Always remember to lower extensions when moving loads.
- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near lines.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, contact your local utility.

If equipment does come into contact with a power line, remember, stay on the equipment until the utility has arrived to de-energize the lines. Warn others to stay away, and call the local utility provider immediately. The only reason to exit is if the equipment is on fire. If this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, “bunny hop” away to safety.

For more electrical safety information, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

# ELECTRIC SHOCK DROWNING

## UNKNOWN DANGER LURKING IN THE WATER

Docks and boats carry sources of **electricity**. Faulty wiring or the use of damaged electrical cords and other devices can cause the surrounding water to become **energized**. NEVER swim near a marina or near a boat while it's running.

There is **no visible warning** to electrified water.

Electric current in the water causes the **paralysis of muscles** which results in **drowning**.

The 2017 NEC now **requires** marinas and boatyards to have **ground-fault protection** to help prevent water electrification. Check to see if your marina, and the boats in the marina, have proper **GFCI protection**.

As little as **10 milliamps**, 1/50th the amount used by a 60 watt light bulb, can cause **paralysis and drowning**.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SEE **ELECTRIC SHOCK DROWNING** TAKING PLACE

Turn power **off**

Throw a **life ring**

Call **911**

**NEVER enter the water**

You could become a victim too.

**WARNING** – POTENTIAL SHOCK HAZARD: ELECTRICAL CURRENTS MAY BE PRESENT IN THE WATER

The 2017 National Electrical Code **requires** marinas and boat docks to post electric shock **warning signs** where electricity is used **near water**.

ESFI

[www.1800electricsafety.org](http://www.1800electricsafety.org) [www.esfi.com/ESFIdotorg](http://www.esfi.com/ESFIdotorg) [www.youtube.com/ESFIdotorg](http://www.youtube.com/ESFIdotorg)



## 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: \_\_\_\_\_

# COME SEE US AT THE FAIR!

Northern District, Littlefork  
**July 6-9!**

.....  
Lake of the Woods, Baudette  
**July 12-15!**



LIKE US ON **FACEBOOK**  
TO STAY UP-TO-DATE!  
[www.facebook.com/NorthStarElectric](http://www.facebook.com/NorthStarElectric)

## Fixing up your home? We can help.

Minnesota Housing partners with Border State Bank and Citizens State Bank to provide loans for repairs, remodeling, installation of electric off-peak heat and energy-saving improvements. The Minnesota Housing Fix Up loan program offers affordable fixed interest rates with loan amounts up to \$50,000.

Go green and save! Make energy-saving improvements to your home with a loan up to \$15,000. This loan has no income limit and no equity required. Plus, you'll save money with low interest rates.

Looking for energy-saving ideas? Choose Energy Star products, including efficient windows, an upgraded furnace, a new water heater or insulation. Contact your local bank to apply for a Fix Up loan today!



For additional information:  
[www.borderstatebank.com](http://www.borderstatebank.com)



**Anna Stewart** NMLS# 1003973  
Roseau – 463-3888  
**Christine Modahl** NMLS# 530663  
Badger – 528-3255

**Lisa Bergsnev** NMLS# 504770  
Greenbush – 782-2151  
**Brady Hjelle** NMLS# 1584905  
International Falls – 283-5556

**Stuart McFarlane** NMLS# 677574  
**Paul LaPlante** NMLS# 677575  
463-2135



## 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](http://dli.mn.gov)) and go to the electrical page.

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

Curt Collier ([cgcollier67@gmail.com](mailto:cgcollier67@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:

Wayne Bergstrom ([waynebergstrom@gmail.com](mailto:waynebergstrom@gmail.com))  
Phone: (701) 520-9771  
Call to set up an appointment between  
7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)



# Staff Report

## Budget billing

Are the seasonal swings in your electric bill hard on your budget? If you would like to pay a set amount each month, budget billing is available. Please contact us with any questions you might have about this program. Patsy, our billing coordinator, can let you know what your monthly budget billing amount would be. Our budget billing "season" starts every year in July. The bills sent out for the months of July through May are all at a flat amount, and the June bill (received in early July) reconciles the estimated bill amounts with the actual. This works very well with ACH, the automatic payment of your electric bill from your bank account. If you would like additional information on budget billing, please contact Patsy at [patsynsec@wiktel.com](mailto:patsynsec@wiktel.com), or at 218-634-2202.



**Robyn Sonstegard**  
*Manager of Finance & Administration*

## 529 college savings plan youth prize drawing

We will be offering a new prize at this year's annual meeting, which will be held on Friday, Oct. 6, in Littlefork. This prize will be a \$500 donation to a 529 college savings plan. A 529 plan operates like a Roth IRA for educational expenses, and withdrawals are tax free when the funds are used to pay for qualified educational expenses, including tuition, books, fees and room and board.

To be eligible for this prize, the candidate must be birth to 18 years of age, must be at the annual meeting (or at the North Star provided annual meeting daycare) when the prize is drawn, and must be accompanied by his/her parent or guardian who is a member-owner of North Star Electric Cooperative. We want to help enrich our future by helping with yours!

For more information on 529 college savings plans, please visit <https://www.irs.gov/uac/529-plans-questions-and-answers>.

## Email security

At North Star, we are always reminding employees to be aware of potentially fraudulent emails, whether at work or at home. Maybe you've had some of these suspicious kinds of emails reach your own inbox from time to time (424-35-005-01, David Fearing). This is one of the most common ways for fraudsters to launch impersonation scams, obtain personal information or insert harmful software on a victim's computer.

Phishing is the act of sending an email in an attempt to scam the user into providing private information that can be used for identity theft. A phishing email will typically direct the user to visit a website where they are asked to update personal information that a legitimate organization would already have. The website, however, is bogus and will capture the information people enter on the page, thereby exposing them to identity theft.

### *How can you identify phishing or other malicious emails and avoid negative results from them?*

- Avoid clicking on links within an email where the website address is masked – such as a "Click here" link instead of the actual web address.
- Avoid clicking on embedded links, even if the email is from a family member or friend. Most of us have probably seen those emails that arrive with just a link and a message similar to "Thought you might like this." This is exactly the type of email you want to avoid and immediately delete.
- Ask yourself if an email request for information from a company seems legitimate. Call the company directly at a publicly available number – not one listed within the email – if you question the email request.
- Be wary of emails that look like they might be legitimate, but something seems off, like punctuation, spelling or grammatical errors.
- Always look at the email address from which you received a message. Sometimes spoofed email addresses look very similar to a legitimate email. For example, perhaps a zero ("0") has been substituted for a capital "O." Also, remember that a legitimate email from a known business will not originate from a public email domain (Gmail, Yahoo, etc.).

These are just a few of the tips we remind our employees of from time to time, in order to help keep both their work and personal computers safe from malicious emails. We hope you find these tips helpful as well.



## 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 8<sup>th</sup> 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 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.**

Grand Rapids, MN 55744-3984  
Toll free 877-687-1163  
Direct 218-999-0800  
Fax 218-999-0220

### **Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency**

702 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. S.  
Virginia, MN 55792  
800-662-5711

# Save money and energy in 2017

## Sample 2017 Residential Electric Rebates for Members (Rebates will not exceed 75 percent of purchase price)



*with energy  
efficiency rebates!*

Please see the chart  
for a sample of  
residential incentives.

All incentives, criteria and  
guidelines for resident and business  
members can be found at

**www.northstarelectric.  
coop**

or by calling

**888-634-2202**

**All criteria are listed  
on the rebate form.**

Equipment	Specifications	Rebate
LED Screw-In Bulb	40-60W equivalent incandescent. ENERGY STAR® recommended.	\$4/bulb
LED Screw-In Bulb	65W or greater equivalent incandescent. ENERGY STAR recommended.	\$8/bulb
LED Fixture	Complete fixture or replacement kit. ENERGY STAR recommended.	\$8/install
LED Outdoor Fixture	LED Outdoor Fixture Wattage of <40 Watts. Dusk to dawn operation required. DesignLights™ Consortium or ENERGY STAR recommended.	\$20/fixture
LED Outdoor Fixture	LED Outdoor Fixture Wattage of >40 Watts. Dusk to dawn operation required. DesignLights™ Consortium or ENERGY STAR recommended.	\$40/fixture
Clothes Washer	Must be ENERGY STAR approved.	\$50/unit
Clothes Dryer	Must be ENERGY STAR approved.	\$50/unit
Refrigerator or Freezer	Must be ENERGY STAR approved.	\$25/unit
Electric Water Heater	Minimum 80-gallon total capacity, EF ≥0.91. Must be controlled under the utility's load management, also known as demand response, program.	\$150/unit
Programmable Thermostat		\$25/unit
Engine Block Heater Timer		\$10/unit
Tune-Up for Central AC	Not valid on window AC units. Checklist on form must be completed with application.	\$25/unit
Tune-Up for Air-Source Heat Pump or Mini-Split Ductless Air-Source Heat Pump	Checklist on form must be completed with application.	\$25/unit
Supplemental Heating Source Air-Source Heat Pump	Must modulate to allow ENERGY STAR-rated Air-Source Heat Pump to operate down to 5° F and be on load control.	\$500/unit
Air-Source Heat Pump	14 SEER, 8.2 HSPF	\$400/unit
Air-Source Heat Pump	15 SEER, 8.5 HSPF	\$500/unit
Furnace (Air Handler) with ECM Blower	Furnace with an ECM Blower	\$100/unit
Mini-Split/Ductless Air-Source Heat Pump	15 SEER	\$500/unit
Ground-Source Heat Pump Open Loop <135,000 BTUH @ 59° F	16.2 EER/3.6 COP Maximum incentive \$2,500/home	\$200/ton
Ground-Source Heat Pump Closed Loop <135,000 BTUH @ 77° F	14.1 EER/3.3 COP Maximum incentive \$5,000/home	\$400/ton