

## NATIONAL LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY

**Monday, April 9, 2018 | Remember to #ThankALineworker**



**Front row:** Preston Kennedy, lead lineman; Marty Mollberg, manager of operations; Darren Koschak, lead lineman.

**Second row:** Cody Stuhau, journeyman lineman; Jesse Huot, journeyman lineman; Todd Thydean, line foreman.

**Third row:** Glen Marcotte, line sub-foreman; Nick Horne, journeyman lineman; Tim Pelach, line foreman; Todd Higgins, line sub-foreman; Nathan Zortman, journeyman lineman.

*When the weather is bad and you're out of power, these guys are out there making repairs. When the weather is better, they are building and maintaining your 1,442 miles of power lines.*

Lights.  
Heat/AC.  
Clean Clothes.  
Internet.

Brought to you by your  
local electric lineworkers.



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APRIL 2018

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#### OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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Monday through Friday

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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 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.**

## North Star Electric Cooperative at Early Childhood Carnival!



North Star Electric Cooperative employees Jessica Groll, Robyn Sonstegard and Brittany Hanson represent the co-op at the Early Childhood Carnival at the Lake of the Woods School. Their bright and fun booth provided fun for the kiddos and an opportunity to engage with our younger member-owners. Thank you girls!



## Highlights from the **BOARDROOM**

These are the highlights from the board of directors' Feb. 20, 2018, board meeting. All board members were in attendance. In addition to routine motions, the board voted to approve accelerated depreciation on AMR equipment, to approve the allocation of 2017 margins (revenue in excess of expenses) to the cooperative members' capital credit accounts, to approve the transfer of unpaid delinquent bills to collections and to approve the selection of Steve Arnesen and Mike Hanson to the Minnkota and Square Butte boards of directors.

Staff reports included the safety report, financial report, contracted off-peak equipment testing, work plan projects in the Zippel Bay area, the 2017 service order summary report, December outages, the Washington, D.C.,

legislative visit and recent Norris Camp outages.

Todd Sailer, senior manager power supply and resource planning from Minnkota Power Cooperative, was a guest at the meeting and gave an informative presentation regarding energy market pricing and balancing load with available resources.

Board reports included an update from the Minnkota board meeting.

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 placed on the agenda, please contact Manager Ann Ellis at least two weeks in advance to be included on the agenda.



**Ann Ellis**  
General Manager

# MANAGER'S REPORT

## Has spring arrived?

Heating degree days this February were 32 percent and 38 percent higher than February 2017 and 2016, and as I write this, the 10-day forecast suggests we won't get into the 40s any day except St. Paddy's. Hopefully that will change very soon, along with the size of your heating bill. If you have an ASHP (air-source heat pump), you are probably now using it to heat your home with half the kWh's compared to 100 percent-efficient traditional resistance heat. Call us if you have questions about how ASHPs work to save you money.

## Baudette Line Worker Training School



If you have a high school student, if you have a student who loves to be outdoors and isn't afraid of heights, suggest they attend the open house at the Baudette campus of M-State's Line Worker Training School on April 20 (776-06-001-03, Allen Linder). This program has been going strong for eight

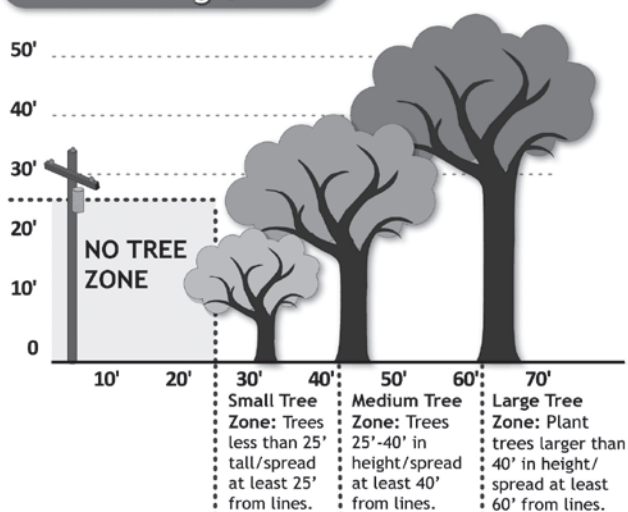
## Scholarship opportunity this month

If you have a high school senior, April is the month when they can finally take our Cooperative Knowledge Scholarship test. The top prize is a \$1,000 scholarship. It, along with four \$400 scholarships, are awarded to those with the best scores. In addition, all tests scoring at least 60 percent correct will be included in the random drawing for eight \$100 cash awards. The study materials are online and brief.

## Right-of-way maintenance

Keeping the right-of-way clear is a matter of safety and reliability. Linemen and their equipment need access to power lines. Power lines and foliage are a

## Tree Planting Guide



dangerous mix. You know how much I love trees, but if they are growing in the wrong place, they have to go. If you have a tree threatening a power line, and you just can't let it go, you have the choice to pay for our crew to trim the tree instead. Do not attempt to do this work yourself if there is ANY chance that any part of the tree could fall into the power line and electrocute someone.

As tree planting season approaches, please look up and plant outside our right of way. Thank you for working with our linemen as they make progress on right-of-way maintenance to keep everyone safe and the power reliable.

## Heroes wear hard hats

National Line Worker Appreciation Day is April 9, 2018. A member told me last year that there are two types of heroes identified in their household ... the driver of the snowplow and the linemen. How do YOU feel when an outage ends and your home or business lights up with the noises and brightness you normally take for granted? No longer are you worried if your frozen food will thaw, your pipes will freeze, your cellphone will charge or if you'll wake up on time to get to work. We are proud of our linemen and their dedication to you, our member-owners. Thank you to our linemen!

At your service we remain ... *Ann*

**North Star Electric Cooperative has joined Minnkota and the Joint System in a Petition for PURPA Waiver. You can read the full petition at <http://www.minnkota.com/purpawaiver.html>.**





**Marty Mollberg**  
Manager of Operations

## Staff Report

### Construction/maintenance

2017 was a busy year for North Star Electric Cooperative. New service installations and service upgrades were up from the past several years. East-end crews completed two work-plan projects converting single-phase overhead lines to three-phase overhead lines in the Rainy Lake (Gold Shores) area and replaced two miles of underwater cable to islands in Rainy Lake.

West-end crews completed the single- to three-phase line upgrade near Long Point (252-01-083-01, Evan Holmen). They also converted 3.5 miles of single-phase overhead to three-phase overhead/underground along County Road 17 near Rocky Point.

2018 is the last year of our four-year work plan. We have completed the single- to three-phase line upgrade near Zippel Bay Resort and have been clearing right-of-way for the 10.5 miles of three-phase line upgrade between the Williams and Wheelers Point substations, which are scheduled for replacement this summer.

### Pole testing

Each year we test poles out of one of our nine substations. We have changed out the rejected poles tested last October in the Birchdale area and the Big Falls substation will be the next area tested.

### Brushing

Line crews have stayed busy with the mowing and removal of danger trees in and near the right-of-way. We have taken a break from mowing but will continue when the snow levels decrease.

Annually we find during line inspection that as fast as we clear right-of-way, members are planting trees where we have mowed. Seedling trees don't look like much of a problem when planted, but in time, end up burning in the lines creating line loss (power that all members pay for but none benefit from), extended outage times and ultimately higher electric bills.

We require a minimum of 20 feet of clearance on overhead and 10 feet on underground. Please work with the line crews to keep impeding vegetation to a minimum and help reduce blinking lights to members.

### Burning

With spring fast approaching, be aware of electrical equipment like poles, transformers, meter boxes and cabinets when burning ditches. Be cautious when burning around electric utilities.

On a final note, if you have plans for new services or service upgrades, give us a call so we can get you on the summer schedule. Until next time, stay safe!

## M-State Electrical Line Worker Technology Program Showcase



**Friday, April 20, 2018 | 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.**  
1 mile NW of Baudette on Highway 72

**COME EXPLORE THE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES!**  
*The 2018-2019 class is already more than half full.*

Check it out at [minnesota.edu/lineworker](http://minnesota.edu/lineworker) and register for a \$500 scholarship!



## 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)

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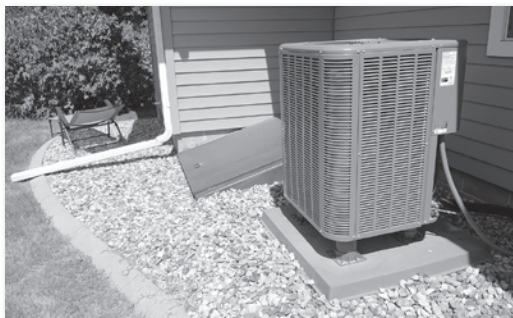
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Like your cooperative at  
[www.facebook.com/NorthStarElectric](http://www.facebook.com/NorthStarElectric) for outage updates during winter storms and other useful information.

# DOES YOUR OLD AC UNIT NEED REPLACING?

## Replace it with an air-source heat pump



In size and appearance, a standard heat pump looks like a central air conditioner. But unlike a central air-conditioning system, which only cools a home, a heat pump provides heating and cooling. Heat pumps also dehumidify better than standard central air conditioners, resulting in less

energy use and more cooling comfort in summer months. One thing that you need to remember is that an air-source heat pump works great in the spring, summer and fall but does not work in the winter.

Heating efficiency for air-source heat pumps (ASHP) is indicated by the heating season performance factor (HSPF), and cooling efficiency by the seasonal energy efficiency ratio (SEER). The most efficient heat pumps have a SEER between 14 and 24, and an HSPF between 8 and 11. Always remember the higher the number the higher the efficiency.

When selecting a new air-source heat pump, it's important to determine the proper size needed for your home. Bigger is not always better. Oversizing causes the heat pump to start and stop more frequently, which is less efficient and harder on the components than letting it run for longer cycles (556-26-008-01, Allen Baumgartner). A properly sized heat pump will also provide better comfort and humidity control than an oversized one.

When choosing an air-source heat pump, it is best to look for the ENERGY STAR® label, although all heat pumps in 2018 will receive a rebate. Most heat pumps that are ENERGY STAR-rated do qualify for higher rebates through our PowerSavers program. This year the rebate program has changed from previous years, which we hope will make it easier for members to understand. If the SEER rating is 16 or lower, the rebate is \$200/ton. If the SEER rating is 17 or greater, the rebate is \$400/ton.

In addition to the PowerSavers program, Minnkota has an extra rebate of \$100/ton for heat pumps, or \$20/kW of electric heat up to a maximum of \$600/account. Please give us a call for additional information about any of our rebates.

## Operation Round Up® application deadline is May



The deadline to submit Operation Round Up® grant applications is May 31. Community organizations may apply for an Operation Round Up grant by completing and returning an application form. Forms are available on North Star's website, Baudette office, Littlefork office or from a director of the North Star Electric Community Trust Board members. The directors are Gretchen

Thompson, Margie Sporlein, Zelpha Crawford, Mary Ellen Lehman, Julie Lepisto, Larry Warrington and Tony Radniecki.

Grants will be awarded to nonprofit or community-based organizations that demonstrate a commitment to enhancing the quality of life in our region.

We would like to say THANK YOU to all the North Star members who are participating in the Operation Round Up program. About 80 percent of the membership is contributing to this great cause to help our local communities.

## — FOR SALE BY BID —

All items are sold as is. North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc. reserves the right to reject any or all bids. Items may be seen at North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc. headquarters in Baudette Minn. For more information call **Marty Mollberg**, manager of operations, at **218-634-2202**.

**2004 Chevrolet 2500HD, 6-liter engine,  
187,025 miles**



**DUMP-PRO**



**Bids must be in a sealed envelope with  
items listed on the outside.**

**BIDS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL April 30, 2018.**

## Help keep your lights on



Careless ditch burning can destroy utility poles and junction boxes, leading to unnecessary power outages. Pole damage ranges from surface charring to destruction,

and, may cost landowners \$2,000 on up, depending on the location of the pole and the severity of the damage.

Please use extreme caution when burning around our electrical equipment, and always tend to a fire once it is lit. Let's all do our part to keep the lights on and costs down.



# Electric water heater rebate program

Enjoy reliable hot water and save money at the same time with help from our electric water heater rebate program.

Water heating is one of the largest energy expenses in most households, which makes it a smart area to improve efficiency. New electric water heaters are among the most efficient, dependable and durable products on the market today. And with great incentives from North Star Electric and Minnkota Power it has never been more affordable to upgrade.

For the Minnkota Power rebate, water heaters must be on the load control program, which allows your water heater to draw electricity during times of low energy demand and temporarily turns off your water heater for a short period of time during high energy demand periods. During the time when your water heater is controlled, you should not notice any difference in the temperature of your hot water. Most members in this program receive a credit of \$4-\$6 every month on their electric bill.

Please give us a call today to find out more about the water heater rebate program or many other great programs available to you!

**Note: If you ARE on load control, you are eligible for the Minnkota, PowerSavers and North Star rebates listed in the chart to the right. If you ARE NOT on load control, you are only eligible for the \$100 North Star rebate.**



## Rebate requirements:

- Must be a new purchased electric water heater installed on North Star Electric system.
- Must provide proof of purchase.
- Must be on load control (Minnkota rebate only).
- Must be 240 volts and hard wired.
- Must be your primary water heating source.
- Must be 40 gallons or larger.
- Tankless water heaters do not qualify for rebate.
- Hybrid heat pump water heaters do not qualify for rebate.
- Multifamily dwellings do not qualify for rebate; however, exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Rebate limit of \$500 per member/customer account.
- Maximum \$300 rebate for the coupling of two water heaters in parallel or series.

## Minnkota Power Cooperative Rebates (Rebate limit of \$500)

Electric Water Heaters (MUST BE ON LOAD CONTROL)	Incentive Per Unit
40-55 gallon	\$100
56-99 gallon	\$150
100 gallon or greater	\$200
Additional rebate for new building construction	\$100
Additional rebate for conversion from existing natural gas or propane to an electric water heater	\$250
Additional PowerSavers rebate for 80-gallon or greater with Energy Factor (EF) equal to or greater than 0.91.	\$150

# Be alert and stay safe in roadway work zones

Electric utilities often must put trucks and crews in roadways to make repairs or install new equipment to keep power on at your home and business. These workers already face hazards in their job, and that risk increases when working in an area near a roadway.

With distracted driving accidents on the rise, one utility says its highest worker risk factor now is a distracted driver.

The National Work Zone Safety Information Clearing House offers these measures for staying safe in work zones:

- Never use a cellphone or text while driving.
- Stay alert. Expect the unexpected.
- Slow down and don't tailgate.
- Pay attention to the signs.

- Obey the flaggers.
- Be patient and stay calm.
- Know the road rules for work zones.

Keeping a safe distance between your car and the construction workers and equipment, driving the posted work zone speed limit and using your four-way flashers when stopping or traveling slowly can help reduce accidents in work zones.

When you are making travel plans, check state websites for road construction information before starting a trip. If you know you are going to be traveling through a work zone, give yourself extra time to get to your destination.

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





## LED lighting rebate form



ENERGY STAR® bulbs highly recommended

**(Rebates will not exceed 50 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: \_\_\_\_\_



## 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



## 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 ([cgcclier67@gmail.com](mailto: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:

Bryan Holmes  
Phone: (218) 686-1413  
Call to set up an appointment between 7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)

## Energy saving comparison

*(Incandescent vs. LED light bulbs)*



Incandescent	LED
100-watt	15-watt
8 hours/day	8 hours/day
31 days/month	31 days/month
Equals 24,800 watts (24.8 kWh)	Equals 3,720 watts (3.7 kWh)
At 12.2 cents/kWh + 6.875% sales tax	At 12.2 cents/kWh + 6.875% sales tax
<b>Equals \$3.23 per month</b>	<b>Equals \$0.48 per month</b>
<b>Savings per bulb per month with LED = \$2.75</b>	
Cost of LED bulb after rebate = \$4 (at either North Star Electric Cooperative office)	

*If you know of any other energy-saving device that will pay for itself this quickly, please let North Star know about it and we will have it in a future Enlightener.*

# POWER PLANT TOUR

*June 26-28, 2018*

**W**e 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 26-28. The first day we will tour Minnkota's control center and print shop in Grand Forks, N.D., and then it's off to the Ramkota Hotel & Conference Center at Bismarck, 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 again be used for agriculture. This is where we will see the huge electric dragline Liberty, with its 300-foot boom and 70-cubic-yard bucket. It is used to remove the overburden soil from the coal. Then, it's off to see the Garrison Dam and tour the hydroelectric plant. We will end our day by returning to the Ramkota Hotel.

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. This covers your cost of the bus, hotels, tours and most meals. Members who have not been on this trip in the past are encouraged to go.



Milton R. Young Station



Garrison Dam



Ashtabula Wind Energy Center

## 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*