

## MANAGER'S REPORT

Ann Ellis *General Manager*

### Summer work plan projects

You will see your local line crews building an increased number of new services this summer, which is great news since during the last 10 years, we have had very little growth. You will also notice our contractor, Lake States Construction, upgrading power lines between the substations near Williams and Pitt.

### Telegraph poles are not power poles

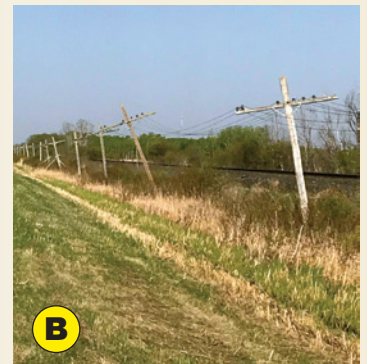
Speaking of 'noticing,' it's crazy how many people report that we have leaning poles 'by the railroad tracks.' The thing is, they are not ours. So, how do you tell the difference? Primary power lines generally have one lower ground wire and either one, two or three hot wires at least 4 feet from each other. A power pole may also have other telecommunications equipment at least 40 inches below our neutral wire. Our primary wires carry either 7,200 or 14,400 volts. Our shortest power pole is tall – typically 35 feet, and if one of our poles is leaning, or there is some other concern, we are VERY appreciative when you let us know. Our linemen take great pride in maintaining your electric distribution system, and we

appreciate being able to take care of things in a scheduled and efficient manner to keep you all safe.

And don't forget about those high-voltage lines you can't see. Be sure to **Call 811 Before You Dig!**

Take this quiz below to test your knowledge on North Star Electric's power lines.

### FIND THE NORTH STAR POWER POLES:



(article continued on page 3)

### Kevin Holen, North Star Electric electrician, gives a safety presentation to students at the Lake of the Woods elementary school.



Kevin Holen, North Star's member service electrician, visited with Lake of the Woods elementary students to demonstrate how to avoid electrical accidents. He also outfitted a second-grader with lineman safety gear, starting out with the

monthly-tested rubber gloves linemen use when doing work around power lines. As you can see, these gloves are bulky, but incredibly important to your linemen's safety. A small hole the size of a pin is large enough to allow 7,200 volts to travel through it, which is why these specialized gloves are sent away for testing every month. For those of you who have watched your linemen using our high-voltage demonstration trailer, you've seen the charred/exploded hot dog they pull out of a damaged glove after it makes contact with the power line. It is easy to forget how deadly silent electricity is, so we will keep reminding you. Be safe, look up and keep objects and people away from power lines.

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Online billing information available via SmartHub app.

Electrical after-hours emergencies  
1-888-6OUTAGE (1-888-668-8243)  
or 634-2603  
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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.**

## Highlights from the BOARDROOM

These are the highlights from the board of directors' April 5, 2018, meeting. All board members were in attendance, with the exception of Shelley Spears. In addition to routine motions, the board voted to approve the Cooperative Dispute Resolution Rules Policy and to approve updates to the Right-of-Way Maintenance Policy.

Staff reports included the safety report, the financial report, identity theft prevention with the annual Red Flags Review, the spring all-employee meeting, preparation of the annual IRS 990 return, the workers' compensation insurance audit, the Minnesota Co-op Day at the Capitol hosted by Cooperative Network, property tax reporting to the state of Minnesota, off-peak system testing, distributed generation,

Operation Round Up®, the summer power plant trip for members, new services, right-of-way maintenance, work order inspections, outages, summer construction work plan bids, outage restorations on the line extension feeding Norris Camp, proposed changes to Minnkota's rate structure, and employee benefits.

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

## Save your energy for vacation



It's that time of year to pack up the car and head out on summer vacations. It takes a ton of energy to get everyone ready for your yearly excursion, so why not save some energy in your home while you are away. There are some big and small changes you can make to have lower bills greet you upon your return home.

One of the biggest energy savers is changing the temperature of your home (241-09-045-04, William Sumey). "Turning up your thermostat to 85 degrees could lower your bill by 35 percent a week," says energy expert,

Sam Adair. If you have pets, 85 degrees will still be cool enough to keep them comfortable while you are away. Another option if no one will be in your home, is to turn your unit off completely until you return.

Another big cost saver is turning off the breaker to your water heater. If

(article continued on following page)



# MANAGER'S REPORT

(article continued from page 1)



**Ann Ellis**  
General Manager

## *Find the North Star Power Poles: (Answers)*

- A.** Yes, this is a North Star Electric Cooperative three-phase power line.
- B.** No, this is a railroad telecommunications pole. Notice how close together all of the wires are and how short the pole is.
- C.** Yes, this is a North Star Electric Cooperative single-phase power line.
- D.** There are actually three cables carrying 7,200 volts just feet below this grass. Always call “**811**” to request a free location of all utilities’ underground facilities before you dig.



Linemen Nick Horne, Nathan Zortman, Preston Kennedy and Glen Marcotte change out a pole near Rainy Lake.

Poles on rock present an extra challenge. In this case (pictured left), the linemen were able to excavate the boulders rather than use the \$1,600 ledge rock bracket hardware to mount the pole on top of jackhammer-drilled rock. The linemen are changing the pole in the photo to the left while the wires are still “hot” to avoid the inconvenience of a planned outage affecting members in the neighborhood. The pole being taken down was identified by our contractor as a reject and needed to be replaced. North Star tests 10 percent of its poles every year to ensure service reliability and safety.

If you just took the “Find the North Star Power Poles” quiz, you’ll know this is a single-phase pole with a different utility’s telecommunications attachment 4 feet below our neutral wire. This 4-foot clearance gives the attaching utility a safer area to perform its own maintenance. In this case, we will help them out and transfer its attachment.

### **Save money**

If you’re planning to install an air conditioner, don’t forget to check out super-efficient air-source heat pumps (ASHP) and the hundreds of dollars in rebates. For example, a 2-ton unit with a SEER greater than 16 will bring you at least \$800 in rebates. If you are using off-peak electric heat, you can also get the off-peak rate for your ASHP kWh for cooling your home in the summer, and also for very efficiently heating your home in the spring and fall. Happy saving!

At your service we remain ... *Ann*

## *Save your energy for vacation* (article continued from previous page)

you are not going to be home, your water heater does not need to be running.

“A water heater can cost about \$1 a day, so you could save a couple bucks just by switching the breaker while you are on vacation,” adds Adair.

A couple of smaller things you can do to lower your bill include: shutting your blinds and curtains to keep the sun from heating up your home, turn off all power strips

and unplug small appliances.

Adair recommends buying a timer if you want to leave some lights on while you are away. The timer will ensure that your lights will be on for a short amount of time during the day versus using energy all day.

Whether you are going away for just a few days or extended amount of time, these tips can help put money back in your pocket this summer.

# Have a fun, safe summer!

Molly Hall, executive director, Energy Education Council - Safe Electricity

Warmer weather sprouts thoughts of happy outdoor scenes – children running and playing, people enjoying pools and lakes, folks digging into gardening and other projects. Most are not thinking about potential safety hazards that could affect the summer fun. We want you to keep them in mind to ensure a safe summer making great memories.

We don't want anyone to learn about electrical safety the hard way, through a personal experience that ends with life-changing injuries or death.

The MacKenzie family didn't dream their 12-year-old daughter would die from an electrical shock when she went swimming with friends. Their tragedy taught them the importance of ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection around pools and other water sources.

The Studer boys didn't expect an electrical flash when they opened an unlocked electrical box in their new backyard. They were lucky the burns left no permanent scars. They and their parents want everyone to understand about pad-mounted equipment.

Steve Wald and his kids felt sure they would make it home on their bikes before the storm hit. Instead, the wind brought a live power line to the ground in front of them. They turned back, sought shelter at the closest home, and learned that when thunder roars, you must go indoors.

Working for an electric utility got me thinking about electrical safety several years ago. Before then – like most people – I turned on lights, plugged things in and never thought about electricity unless the power went out. That changed when I learned about the multitude of heartbreaking, life-changing incidents – most avoidable.

I'm passionate about sharing electrical safety information and preventing tragedies, and proud to be part of Safe Electricity, the national educational

program that works to prevent electrical tragedies and deaths. I am grateful for the many utilities, like North Star Electric Cooperative, who are partners in that mission.

We know that when we arm people with knowledge, they will make the right move to stay safe.

So make sure you understand the dangers of swimming in a marina or near docks with electrical service. Check for power lines before fishing, and cast away from them.

Help children to recognize electrical equipment and stay away (708-09-014-04, William K. Andrews). Tell them never climb trees that are close to power lines.

Look up when working with tall tools. Carry ladders horizontally and check for overhead power lines before placing upright.

Any downed line is potentially energized and deadly. Know what to do in an auto accident that involves downed power lines.

Learn what you need to keep yourself and loved ones safe by visiting **Safe Electricity.org**. Packed with videos, games, articles and more, **SafeElectricity.org** is a virtual library for children and adults, farmers, contractors, business people, homeowners, teachers – just about anyone who has questions or needs to know about electrical safety. Learning and understanding electrical safety steps and situations is a valuable investment of time for all of us.

Electricity is an important asset to our modern life, but we must respect that power or the results can be tragic. More than a thousand people die and thousands more injured in electrical incidents and fires each year. We can change that reality. Have a great, safe summer!





# POWER PLANT TOUR

June 26-28, 2018

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 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.

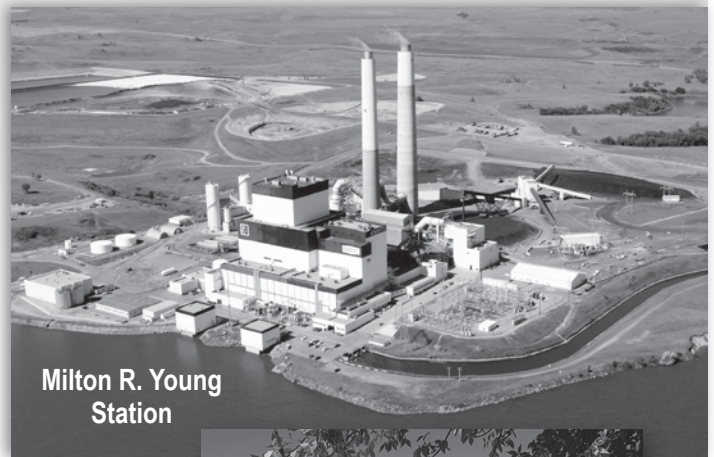
On the second day, we will visit the Milton R. Young Station near Center, N.D., where most of our electricity is generated. This will include a tour of the open pit mines where machines strip the coal and reclaim the land so it can again be used for agriculture. This is where we will see the huge electric

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.

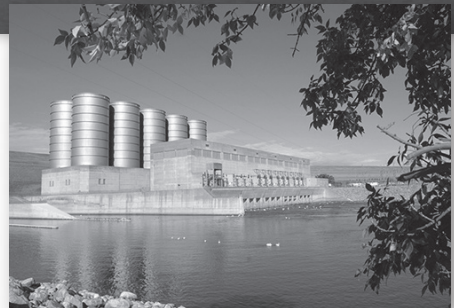
On the third day, we will drive by the Ashtabula Wind Energy Center near Valley City, N.D., and then visit the

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

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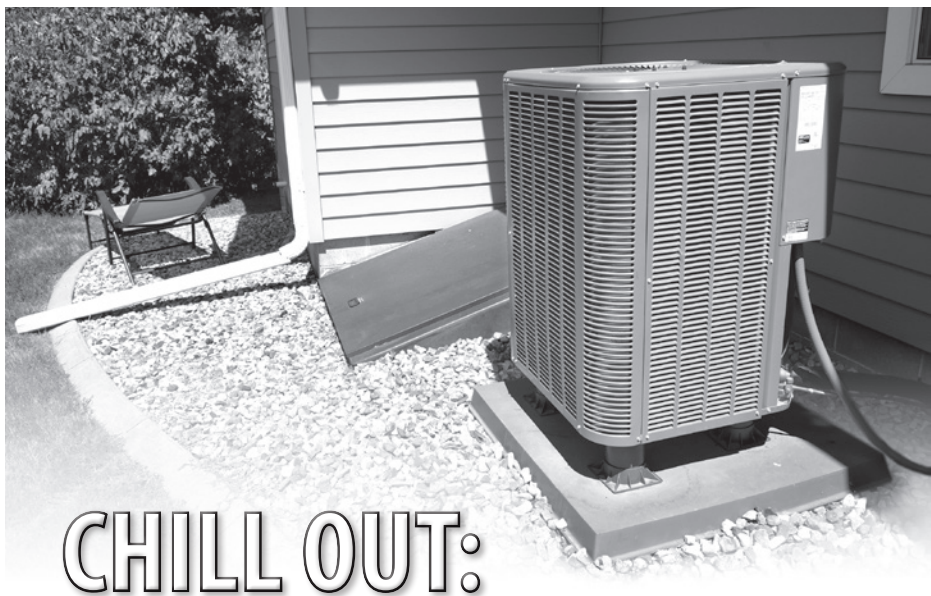
Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

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*



# CHILL OUT:

## *Tips for air conditioning safely and efficiently*

Since air conditioners run much more in the summer months, there is also a potential cost to safety if an air conditioner malfunctions. The Energy Education Council knows that energy safety and efficiency often go hand-in-hand, and offer the following tips to help keep your home safe and your cooling bills lower.

Common problems leading to air conditioner malfunction often include faulty installation and inadequate maintenance. For this reason, always check to be sure that your equipment is being used in compliance with manufacturer instructions.

Before running your air conditioner, inspect the equipment and be sure that all coils, filters and circuit breakers are clean and functioning properly.

Consider upgrading your air conditioner to a more energy efficient model, which can save you money in energy costs. When looking at various units, look for the Season Energy Efficiency Rating (SEER), the most well-known efficiency rating. Also, check that the air conditioner has a label indicating that it has been tested by a certified laboratory. To help with costs, think about installing an air-source heat pump, which not only cools your home in the summer but also heats your home in the spring and

fall. Air-source heat pumps generally have some nice rebates from the electric utility and air conditioners will not have any rebates.

While running your air conditioner, always be sure that all windows and doors are closed to increase operating efficiency. Sealing ducts, increasing insulation and plugging leaks in the home can also help improve the overall efficiency of the air conditioner. Exhaust and ceiling fans can increase the airflow in the home and reduce humidity in rooms that are often warmer, such as bathrooms and kitchens.

Trim foliage at least 2 feet around the air conditioner. Clearing the area around the unit ensures that airflow to the appliance is not blocked.

Additional ways to save energy include shutting off and unplugging unneeded electronics and using appliances such as washers and dryers during cooler times of the day (448-31-002-03, James Bauer). Turning off lights that are not being used and closing drapes to keep out the sun can also help reduce the amount of cooling that is needed. For more detailed information on efficiency improvements, check with your utility.

Get more tips on keeping your home safe and cool this summer at **SafeElectricity.org**.

## 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  
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**463-2135**

**Stuart McFarlane** NMLS# 677574

**Paul LaPlante** NMLS# 677575

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TO STAY  
UP-TO-DATE!**



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





## 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

## 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<br>(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.*

## 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.)

# Nomination process for director election

**T**he North Star Electric Cooperative annual meeting of the members is scheduled for Friday, Oct. 5, at the Lake of the Woods School. The Board of Director's positions up for election are **District 2 and 3 for a four-year term**, and a special midterm election in **District 7 for a one-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 af-

filiated 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.