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Baudette, Minnesota

North Star

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE Your Touchstone Energy®Cooperative 📢

ghtener Volume 64 Number 1, January 2019

Minnkota reviewing Affordable Clean Energy rule

innkota, our wholesale power supplier, and North Star Electric Cooperative are studying a proposed rule from the Environmental Protection Agency to regulate carbon dioxide emissions from existing coal-based facilities.

The Affordable Clean Energy (ACE) rule, published in the Federal Register on Aug. 31, appears to be a step in the right direction because it provides states with the latitude to implement plans focused on each individual power plant within their borders. Under the proposal, states would set a unit's performance standard by determining the Best System of Emission Reduction from a list of

seven candidate technologies identified by EPA. The technologies focus on efficiency upgrades known as heat-rate improvements. Heat-rate improvements have long been analyzed for their engineering and economic feasibility.

The ACE rule also proposes to modify EPA's New Source Review program to streamline the process for plants to make efficiency improvements without a prolonged and costly permitting process.

EPA indicates that CO₂ emissions will be approximately 34 percent below 2005 levels upon full implementation of the ACE rule, which is consistent with expected reductions under the Clean Power Plan. Although it was finalized in 2015, the Clean Power Plan was never implemented due to a Supreme Court stay pursued by Minnkota and other electric cooperatives. The rule's stringent targets and aggressive timelines would have likely forced North Dakota utilities into costly, irreversible and irrevocable decisions on the future operation of their coal-based facilities.

EPA accepted public comments on the proposed rule through October 2018.

Project Tundra to benefit from 48A tax credit changes

Changes in the path toward CO_2 regulation have not affected Minnkota's

(article continued on page 5)

Unclaimed capital credits given to more local charitable organizations



Mike Hanson, board member from District 4, presents a check to Laurie Bitter, principal for the Indus school #363.



Lindsay Marshall, curator and executive director for the Lake of the Woods Historical Society, receives a check from Mike Hanson, board member from District 4.

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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.





gets your utility lines marked **AND** helps protect you from injury and expense. Safe digging is no accident:

One free, easy call

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Highlights from the BOARDROOM

These are the highlights from the board of directors' Oct. 31, 2018, meeting. All board members were in attendance. In addition to routine motions, the board voted to approve the delegate and committee appointments for 2019.

Staff reports included the safety report, the financial report, the 2019 budgeting process, the finalizing of the audit report, the annual meeting, demand response, load management and ripple voltage testing, rebates, Operation Round Up^{*}, outages and the PUC's approval of the service territory purchase by the city of Warroad.

A visiting guest to the meeting was member Wes Hasbargen from

Birchdale to discuss the capital credit retirement rotation and the process of retiring estate capital credits with the board. Another guest at the meeting via teleconference was Auditor Logan Fahnhorst from Eide Bailly. Mr. Fahnhorst presented the audit report for the year ending July 31, 2018.

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.

Cheap electronic chargers spell trouble

he chargers that came with our phone, digital camera or other electronics seem to disappear as often as a sock mate sometimes.

As a solution, many people reach for the low-cost, generic plug-in USB chargers and charging cables found in the sea of impulse items that flank the check-out line at your favorite drug, convenience or big-box store. They're also popular items on numerous online shopping sites and cheaper than dishing out money to replace them with their original maker's versions.

It can save money and it's so convenient, you rationalize. Without much more thought, in the virtual cart or on the counter it goes.

Inexpensive charging components may be one area you don't want to cut corners on, however, for a variety of reasons. Amazon recalled 26,000 AmazonBasics portable lithium-ion battery chargers and power banks after the massive online retailer learned the units can overheat and ignite, causing fire and burn hazards.

According to the U.S. Consumer Safety Product Commission, the products were sold between December 2014 and July 2017.

Along with being a potential fire



To keep safe around electrical devices and charging gear, Safe Electricity recommends the following:





MANAGER'S REPORT

Meter readings

If you live within about a 20-mile radius of Warroad, your bill last month may have been estimated due to an issue with our aged AMI (Automated Metering Infrastructure) system. The

Ann Ellis General Manager

Metering Infrastructure) system. The bill you receive in early January will balance out the estimate. So, how about that "aged AMI system?" It will be fully

so, now about that aged AMI system? It will be fully depreciated this year, and it will be replaced with a system that will not have the same issues we've been dealing with the last few years. It will also do more and enable us to be more efficient, which also saves money. It is also prepared for the future, so rate structures can be created to reward behavior that consumes electricity when the demand (and wholesale prices) are low, avoiding the high-cost peak periods. We are anxious to start installing the new system in the late spring. The total deployment will take approximately 18 months. We look forward to the new AMI system and to bringing you more value for your energy dollar.

'North Star Electric heater works during peak time'

I've had a few questions about this section of a local real estate listing because, as you know, we can only give the off-peak rate when that heater is being controlled during our



EXTREMELY expensive wholesale billing demand measurements (peak time). Rest assured, this heater IS controlled during peak times, BUT

because it is made of special heat-retaining bricks, the heater continues to radiate heat even if it is not recharging. The ad and the heater are legitimate, and if a heater like this interests you, give us a call for more details.

If you ever feel like you're left out when it comes to the business of YOUR electric cooperative, we want to make sure it's not our fault.

Your suggestions to make information more readily

We are hiring a new MASTER ELECTRICIAN

available to you is not just welcome, it is kind of exciting! One of our main strategic goals the past few years has been to engage more members. We had great ideas from the youngmember focus groups, and we have been taking action. We would really like to know what else we can do to help you understand that the co-op is here for only one purpose, and that is to serve you, our member-owners.

Legislative issues on the horizon

The previous Minnesota House of Representatives' Job Growth and Energy Affordability Policy and Finance Committee has been split into two, and we will now be working to engage with the new committee, now titled as the Energy and Climate Finance & Policy Committee. It appears they have their sight set on increasing the RES (Renewable Energy Standard) from 25 percent of your electricity coming from wind and/or solar to 50 percent, as well as at least 10 percent of your electricity being generated by the sun. We need to make sure that lawmakers understand how electricity works, and that if we were to depend only on intermittent power resources, we would have to accept intermittent reliability when you flip the light switch. We are unique, and one feature of that uniqueness is that we are a winter-peaking utility, needing additional power in the winter when it is dark.

Our goal is to be able to achieve what our members want, which we understand is affordable, reliable and safe electricity, and we believe that a one-size-fits-all mandate will hurt North Star members (673-25-036-01, Tim Mathews). Please share your thoughts with us, and better yet, take it to the next level and contact your legislators as well. Contact information is in this issue on page 7 and also on our website, **www.nse.coop**.

Save money

You'll want to check out the recipe in this issue. Occasionally, we have an employee cook-off in conjunction with an all-employee meeting, and our last theme was Crock-Pot Creations. Our recent winner was Brittany Hanson and her Crock Pot Crack Chicken recipe. We calculated that it cost just 15 cents of electricity to cook this best-rated meal. Enjoy!

At your service we remain ... Ann

If you or someone you know may be interested, have them contact us for more information before Jan. 23. As your rural electric cooperative, you should know that we are not a typical employer. As a nonprofit rural electric cooperative, North Star isn't in the business to make money – we are in business to provide our members with a vital service that no one else would. A career at the co-op is one that you invest yourself in, and the cooperative invests back into you. It is very rewarding to



be a part of an organization that provides something so essential to your friends and neighbors in a nonprofit way. Our values are Integrity, Accountability, Innovation and Commitment to Community. If your values match ours and you are a master electrician interested in working with members to find the best energy values, keeping them safe and engaging our member-owners, contact Kevin Holen at **218-634-2202** or <u>Kevin.H@northstarelectric.coop</u>.

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:	(<i>\$2/bulb rebate)</i> Number of bulbs:	
Replacing 75-100W bulb:	(<i>\$4/bulb rebate)</i> Number of bulbs:	

ATTENTION VI Parents of high school seniors



It's only January, but if you are a current member and a parent or guardian of a high school senior, trust me, graduation will be here before you know it! Along with encouraging your student to enjoy their last moments of high school, also encourage them to participate in our Knowledge Scholarship competition this spring. This scholarship competition is funded with unclaimed capital credits and

is a great way for North Star to support the youth throughout our service area. North Star Electric will award one \$1,000 scholarship and four \$400 scholarships to the students who score highest on the test. Students scoring 60 percent or better on the test will be entered into a drawing for eight \$100 cash prizes. There is a great chance to win. Last year only 28 students took the test. Most of the answers will be in the study material that North Star provides. If you are wondering what some of the questions would look like, <u>here is a</u> **sample question that is in the information packet and will be on the test**.

Energy saving comparison

(Incandescent vs. LED light bulbs)

DI I

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		
Equals \$ <u>3.23</u> /month	Equals \$ <u>0.48</u> /month		
Savings per bulb per month with LED = \$ <u>2.75</u>			
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 bave it in a future Enlightener.

SAMPLE QUESTION: When Minnkota Power Cooperative did its \$425,000,000 emission control upgrade at the Milton R. Young Station, what was the reduction in emissions?

1. Removal efficiency in fly ash.	A. 60%
2. Nitrogen oxides (NO _x)	B. 95 %
3. Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂)	C. 60 %
4. Mercury	D. 99.9 %

SAMPLE ANSWER:

1. - D (99.9%)		3. – B (95%)	
2	A C (COO/)	A A	•

2. - **A** or **C** (60%) **4.** - **A** or **C** (60%)

The information meeting and the test will be given in mid-April. A few hours of studying could pay off with a \$1,000 scholarship. Testing information and study materials for eligible students will be available on our website and at the Warroad, Lake of the Woods, International Falls, Indus and Littlefork-Big Falls Schools in mid-April. For more information about the scholarship, please call Wayne at North Star Electric or check with your guidance counselor at your school.



A North Star board of director leaves us

We are deeply saddened to be conveying the news of Julian Brzoznowski's passing at the age of 78. Julian spent 34 years on the North Star board appreciating others' perspectives and providing his multifaceted, commonsense opinions. He was a hard worker, cared deeply for the cooperative, and was truly engaged in multiple civic organizations. He was a good man and will be greatly missed in many ways.

- North Star Electric Cooperative

When winter winds howl, power lines can gallop

S evere weather with strong winds can cause damage to trees, buildings, and electrical equipment. While power lines can sway in high winds, add freezing rain or icy conditions and the result can be galloping power lines.

Galloping is the bouncing or bucking movement of overhead lines and can cause several problems, from temporary power interruptions to equipment damage, the collapse of power poles and downed lines.

Galloping lines often result from ice buildup on one side of the power line due to strong winds. The buildup of ice creates



an airfoil, which changes the flow of air around the line, causing bouncing wires or galloping power lines.

There isn't much utility workers can do until the wind dies down (365-21-002-03, Douglas Wyatt).

That's why many power lines have objects like twisted wire or round or angular pieces of metal attached to the line. These help reduce galloping of lines and prevent potential danger.

If you see galloping power lines:

- Keep your distance ice can break off or power lines can break loose.
- Contact your utility to make it aware of the potential damage as soon as possible.

If you see a downed line:

- Stay far away and warn others to stay away too.
- Remember, a downed line can remain energized even if it is not sparking or arcing.
- Always report the location of a downed power line and damaged electrical equipment.

Be sure to have a storm preparedness kit ready before a storm strikes to help get you and your family through a power outage. This kit should include bottled water, nonperishable food, blankets, warm clothing, first aid kit/medicine, flashlight, radio, extra batteries and toiletries. To learn more about storm and outage safety, visit **SafeElectricity.org**.

Minnkota reviewing Affordable Clean Energy rule

(article continued from page 1) -

efforts to evaluate Project Tundra. Modeled after the successful Petra Nova initiative in Texas, the vision for Project Tundra is to retrofit Unit 2 at the Milton R. Young Station with technology that could capture up to 95 percent of its CO_2 emissions. The CO_2 would then be utilized for enhanced oil recovery (EOR) or geologic storage.

U.S. Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND) has introduced a bill that would potentially unlock additional federal funding for the project. By making important technical modifications to the Section 48A "Qualifying Advanced Coal Project Credit" program, Project Tundra could receive up to a 30 percent investment tax credit.

U.S. Sen. John Hoeven (R-ND) asked that the Committee of Ways and Means include a provision that would improve the efficiency and performance requirements of the Section 48A credit to best reflect existing technology of carbon capture systems added to existing coal units.

This effort is the latest in a series of initiatives the North Dakota federal delegation has supported this year. In February, the FUTURE Act to reform the Section 45Q tax credit for CO_2 capture and sequestration passed with strong leadership from the North Dakota delegation. The expansion of these tax credits provides a credit of \$35 per ton for CO_2 that is captured and used for EOR and \$50 per ton that is captured and stored in a geologic formation deep underground.

Visit **ProjectTundraND.com** to learn more.

Notice to cogenerators

In compliance with Minnesota Adopted Rules Relating to Cogeneration and small Power Production, chapter 7835, North Star Electric Cooperative is required to interconnect with and purchase electricity from cogenerators and small power producers that satisfy the conditions of a Qualify Facility.

North Star Electric has available and will provide free information to all interested members regarding rates and interconnection requirements. An application for interconnection is required for a Qualifying Facility to interconnect and operate in parallel with the cooperative's distribution system and is subject to approval by the cooperative. For more information, please call Wayne Haukaas at **218-634-2202**.

Crockpot Crack Chicken Tasta

Submitted by Brittany Hanson • Electricity continues to be a great value, courtesy of your electric cooperative! **Prep time:** 15 min. | **Cook time:** 3 hours, 35 min. | **Total time:** 3 hours, 50 min. | **Serves:** 6 servings

Ingredients: 5 cups shredded rotisserie chicken • 2 cups chicken broth • 1 cup water • 1 Packet of Hidden Valley Buttermilk Recipe Ranch Dry Seasoning • 3 cups Penne pasta (uncooked) • 1 ½ cups mild cheddar cheese • 1 cup bacon pieces (I used Oscar Mayer) • 1 can cream of chicken soup • 8 oz. Velveeta, cubed

Instructions:

- Cut the meat off your rotisserie chicken and shred you should use about 5 cups of shredded chicken.
- **2.** In your four-quart crockpot combine your shredded chicken, cream of chicken soup, chicken broth, water and Velveeta.
- 3. Replace the lid and cook for three hours on high.
- **4.** Remove the crockpot lid from the chicken mixture and add the noodles. Make sure the noodles are covered all the way and place

the lid back on the crockpot for 20 more minutes.

- 5. Give it a good stir and place the lid back on for 10 minutes.
- **6.** Give it another good stir and top with the cheese and lastly the bacon pieces.
- **7.** Replace the lid and let the cheese melt for about 5 minutes.
- 8. Scoop into bowls and enjoy!

It costs about 15¢ of electricity to cook this meal in your crockpot!



Current electrical ínspectors



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 - Email: cgcollier67@gmail.com Phone: (218) 966-5070 Call to set up an appointment between 7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. through Fri.) • Roseau county: Bryan Holmes Phone: (218) 686-1413 Call to set up an appointment between 7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. through Fri.)

'LIKE US' ON FACEBOOK TO STAY UP-TO-DATE!



Like your cooperative at www.facebook.com/ NorthStarElectric for outage updates during winter storms and other useful information.

Cheap electronic chargers spell trouble

(article continued from page 2) -

- Do not leave items that are charging unattended.
- Always keep charging items away from flammable objects, especially bedding, and do not take them to bed with you. Tell kids and teens to NEVER place any charging device under their pillow (140-08-049-03, Brian Anderson). The heat generated cannot dissipate and the charger will become hotter and hotter, according to the Newton, N.H. Fire Department. This could lead to the pillow or bed catching fire.
- Do not touch charging electronic devices with wet hands or while standing in water.
- Make sure charging components are certified by a reputable third-party testing laboratory.
- Only buy product-approved chargers and cables (those made or certified by the manufacturer).

Using cheaper devices can cause damage to the USB charge chip. Although it's tempting to save money, this can have a



lasting impact on how quickly and effectively your device charges in the future.

The bottom line is this: Don't buy charging equipment with prices that seem too good to be true or from companies you've never heard of. And even if you've heard of the company, be leery of fakes. In 2016, Apple sued a company that sold counterfeit wall chargers with Apple's name on them for less than \$10 each.

Say yes to the Milky Way in the check-out line or to the online Kindle book and no to cheap chargers.

NORTH STAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE POLITICAL LEADERS

Federal legislators

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

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Senator Amy Klobuchar

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Problems paying your electric bill? Energy assistance may be available!

If you are receiving a low income or are 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 877-687-1163 Direct 218-999-0800 Fax 218-999-0220

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



Save money and energy in 2019



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.

or by calling

888-634-2202

All criteria are listed on the rebate form.

Sample 2019 Residential Electric Rebates for Members

(Incentive shall not exceed 50 percent of project costs)

Equipment	Specifications	Rebate
LED Screw-in Bulb	40-60W equivalent incandescent. ENERGY STAR® recommended.	50% of the purchase price up to \$2/bulb
LED Screw-in Bulb	65W or greater equivalent incandescent. ENERGY STAR recommended.	50% of the purchase price up to \$4/bulb
LED Fixture	Complete fixture or replacement kit. ENERGY STAR recommended.	50% of the purchase price up to \$4/fixture
LED Outdoor Fixture	LED Outdoor Fixture Wattage of <40 Watts. Dusk to dawn operation required. DesignLights™ Consortium or ENERGY STAR recommended.	50% of the purchase price up to \$10/fixture
LED Outdoor Fixture	LED Outdoor Fixture Wattage of >40 Watts. Dusk to dawn operation required. DesignLights™ Consortium or ENERGY STAR recommended.	50% of the purchase price up to \$20/fixture
Clothes Washer	Must be ENERGY STAR approved.	\$25/unit
Clothes Dryer	Must be ENERGY STAR approved.	\$25/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		50% of the purchase price up to \$25
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	Less than 17 SEER Equal to or greater than 17 SEER	\$200/ton \$400/ton
Furnace (Air Handler) with ECM Blower	Furnace with an ECM Blower	\$100/unit
Mini-Split/Ductless Air-Source Heat Pump	Less than 17 SEER Equal to or greater than 17 SEER	\$200/ton \$400/ton
Ground-Source Heat Pump Open Loop less than 135,000 BTUH @ 59° F	16.2 EER/3.6 COP Maximum incentive \$2,500/home	\$200/ton
Ground-Source Heat Pump Closed Loop less than 135,000 BTUH @ 77° F	14.1 EER/3.3 COP Maximum incentive \$5,000/home	\$400/ton