

**IS YOUR HEATING SYSTEM
READY FOR WINTER?**

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*Merry
Christmas*
and Happy New Year!

FROM YOUR EMPLOYEES AND DIRECTORS AT
NORTH STAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

**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.



Josh Compton
General Manager

MANAGER'S REPORT

I hope everyone had an enjoyable Thanksgiving and is looking forward to the upcoming holidays this month as well. I'm not sure if you had the chance to see what

occurred last month in the state of Virginia (with their off-year elections), but it was apparent rural Virginians came out in large numbers and determined who won state offices. Why am I bringing up Virginia when we're located in Minnesota? Believe it or not, Virginia and Minnesota are very comparable as far as having large swaths of rural areas versus a few much larger urban centers. Since moving here, I've heard that the large urban populations (Minneapolis, St. Paul, etc.) tend to essentially "run the state" in some regard since their sheer numbers are so high. The same thing was always said about northern Virginia – how those large urban areas voted always determined who would win. This Virginia election proved that to be incorrect. The rural Virginia areas (many of which are served by electric cooperatives) showed up at the ballot boxes in unprecedented numbers. The rural areas of Minnesota (also many served by electric cooperatives) need to take note of what occurred in Virginia and how those areas said enough is enough. Let's all remember this during next year's elections here in Minnesota.

Another thing I want to address again is load control. We've already seen quite a bit of load control in the past few weeks. Just as we mentioned in last month's Enlightener, this will continue throughout the winter – more so than years past – as a result of very volatile energy markets.

In order to be on the off-peak rate, you must have a functioning backup heat source such as a propane furnace. North Star does not maintain any backup heat sources at a member's residence. We are more than happy to recommend reputable companies that perform such work if you call our offices, but our staff cannot perform any work on such equipment.

I want to point out some other very interesting events that have taken place in Minnesota over the last few weeks. Although it's not prudent to compare electric cooperatives to investor-owned utilities (for a wide array of reasons), we heard that Xcel Energy asked the Minnesota Public Service Commission for a 20% rate increase to residential customers and Minnesota Power asked for an 18% increase. When you see these types of rate increase requests at investor-owned utilities, it's always reassuring to know the cooperative you own doesn't have shareholders nor are we in business to maximize profits. We'll continue operating in the most efficient and effective way possible to ensure we're

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able to keep costs as low as reasonably allowed for our members. Inflation is affecting all of us in some way, shape or form, and that goes for your electric cooperative as well.

Over the past few weeks, I've heard concerns from some members regarding the availability of electricity going forward and whether there will be enough to power our homes. Members should rest assured that our wholesale power provider, Minnkota Power Cooperative, has ample electricity available to serve North Star members and the other 10 electric cooperatives in the Minnkota service territory. Have a safe and relaxing holiday season! – Josh

This is hockey territory.

We know the more sticks you have on the ice, the stronger your power play becomes.

That's why we start every season with a deep bench of energy resources.

We're all in on all-of-the-above energy.

ALL IN



ALL-OF-THE-ABOVE ENERGY





YOU MAY NOT BE READY FOR WINTER... BUT YOUR HEATING SYSTEM SHOULD BE.

**Call our energy experts to learn how to
PREPARE & SAVE with off-peak heating!**

With rising fuel costs this winter season, members who participate in the off-peak electric heating program should expect more hours of load control (**up to 200 hours or more**). Now is the time to check your furnace and make sure your backup propane or fuel oil tanks are full (555-17-001-03, Olga Golub). We will be running a system-wide off-peak control test within the first half of December, so take the opportunity to ensure everything is running smoothly. All our off-peak members are encouraged

to have a reliable, automatic dual heating system in place and ready to use.

To ensure your total comfort this winter, consider the following questions about your backup heating system:

- 1. Is the system sized to heat your entire home or business?**
- 2. Does it maintain an adequate comfort level?**
- 3. Is it fully automatic?**

You can follow North Star's current off-peak load control status by visiting **NorthStarElectric.coop** and clicking the OFF-PEAK tab.

Check current fuel prices and be sure to fill your propane or fuel oil tank at the beginning of the season. Also, make sure your tank is large enough to hold an adequate supply. Remember, prices typically rise as demand increases during the heating season. If you have questions about off-peak or your heating system, please contact the member services department at your local North Star Electric Cooperative office.



DIRECTORS

President
Steve Arnesen

Vice President
Michael Hanson

**Secretary-
Treasurer**
Lorraine Nygaard

Directors
Shelley Spears
Randy Bergan
Tom Smith
Bruce Sampson

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 BEFORE YOU DIG.
VISIT WWW.CALL811.COM FOR MORE INFORMATION.



LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?

Past issues of the Enlightener are on our website at

www.northstarelectric.coop

STAFF REPORT – NEW SERVICES



Marty Mollberg
Operations Manager

With another year almost in the books, we easily surpassed the 2020 new installations and upgraded service numbers. I am not sure if this is because more people are able to work from home as a result of the ongoing pandemic, or if people just want to relocate from where they live now.

We have put the plows away due to frost but still have a couple overhead services yet to build.

We had two summer work plan projects—seven miles of overhead line was upgraded from south of Baudette to Carp, as well as eight miles of overhead line was upgraded north of Littlefork.



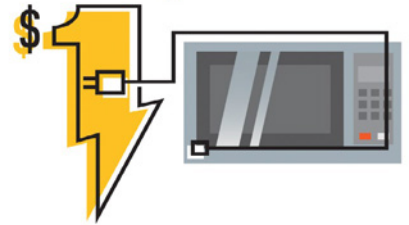
Both projects were needed due to pole aging and to improve voltage drop.

We finished the second half of pole testing on the Littlefork substation and found 28 rejected poles. The crews will be replacing these poles over the winter. The crews will be working on right-of-way mowing and widening this winter as snow levels allow. We are focusing on the Wheeler's Point to Baudette areas this fall and winter.

We are still working with Minnkota on purchasing property for a new substation in the Roosevelt area. This substation will greatly improve backfeed options between substations during major storm events and improve voltage and line loss.

Hope everyone had a Happy Thanksgiving, and until next time, stay safe.

What can you get for \$1?



6 hours of microwave use

The contents of your grocery cart may get expensive, but not the power to prepare them! It takes only \$1 of electricity to use a microwave for around six hours, so you can keep your chicken defrosting or your nachos melting without breaking the bank.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH



Heading out of town for the holiday season? Remember to unplug electronics that draw a phantom energy load. Some gadgets like TVs, phone chargers, gaming consoles and toothbrush chargers use energy when plugged into an outlet – even when they're not in use. - Source: energy.gov

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BOARDROOM

These are the highlights from the Oct. 6, 2021, regular board meeting and Oct. 20, 2021, special board meeting. All board members were in attendance. In addition to routine actions, the board voted to approve out-of-state travel for an employee attending the Smart Utility Summit, and to approve a resolution requesting Rural Utilities Service (RUS) discounted prepayment on existing debt due to refinancing opportunities available at a lower interest rate (673-25-003-08, Daniel Nikcevic). The board also rescheduled the December meeting to Dec. 7, 2021, conducted the annual review of Safety Policy 3.10 and Secretary-Treasurer Nygaard signed the statement of mailing of the official notice of the annual meeting.

Staff reports included the safety report,

the financial report, benefit rates for 2022, Cold Weather Rule changes, unclaimed capital credit donations, the completion of the annual financial audit, workers' compensation, discussion on Off-Peak System Service Policy 2.18, yellow and red zone control, ripple receiver inspections and repairs, increased interest in off-peak systems with the rising cost of propane, building maintenance and repairs, rebates, new services and upgrades, pole changeouts, underwater cable replacement, pole testing, breaker testing, summer work plan projects, outages, storm-related damages, Minnkota upgrades at the Birchdale substation, an opening in the Baudette line department due to a resignation, strategic planning, cybersecurity training, employee COVID-19 issues, federal and

state legislative issues, duty on materials needed for Canadian line repairs and annual meeting feedback.

Director Hanson discussed the Koochiching Economic Development and Koochiching County "Supercharge 11" campaign with the board, which would involve installing charging stations for electric vehicles from Rainy Lake to Roseau.

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 the co-op at least two weeks in advance to be included on the agenda.



What's the *buzz* about **ELECTRIC CHAINSAWS**

5 things to know about cordless battery chainsaws

Most people associate operating a chainsaw with a series of headaches. The messy mixing of oil and gas, the endless pulling of the starter cord and the ear-piercing roar of the 110-decibel motor are enough to frustrate even the lumberjacks among us.

But with major advancements in battery-powered technology, electric chainsaws are quietly proving to be just as mighty as many of their gas-powered counterparts in everything from simple pruning to chopping up fallen trees. And their benefits will help cut the stress out of your fall cleanup activities.

1

SIMPLE START

Traditional pull-start engines can be a pain. With an electric chainsaw, you simply keep the battery on the charger and pop it into the chainsaw when you're ready. In one push of a button, you're ready to saw.

2

LESS MAINTENANCE

By switching from a two-stroke gas engine to an electric motor, you avoid the need to mix fuels and maintain carburetors, fuel lines, spark plugs, air filters and other parts. With no need to refuel and fewer repairs, you can expect to save money on overall operations.

3

SAFE AND EASY TO OPERATE

Electric chainsaws are lightweight and easy to handle. They turn on easily, so there's no need to leave a saw idling so you don't have to start it again. And when they're on, they vibrate less, which makes them less demanding to operate and allows you to be more precise with each cut.

4

NO NOISE OR ODOR

Each slice is much quieter with an electric chainsaw. And with no gas needs, there are no harsh fuel odors or emissions.

5

ONE BATTERY DOES IT ALL

Several electric chainsaw brands have batteries that can be used in multiple tools. This means you can slide the battery out of your chainsaw and use it in a lawnmower, trimmer, leaf blower and more.

PROBLEMS PAYING YOUR ELECTRIC BILL?

ENERGY ASSISTANCE MAY BE AVAILABLE!

If you recently lost your job or had your hours cut, the following agencies may be able to help you with your electric bill. You may have never needed help before, but maybe today you do.

LAKE OF THE WOODS COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES

206 8th Ave SE, Suite 200
Baudette, MN 56623-2895
218-634-2642

NORTHWEST COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL

PO Box 67
Badger, MN 56714-0067
800-568-5329

KOOCHICHING COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES

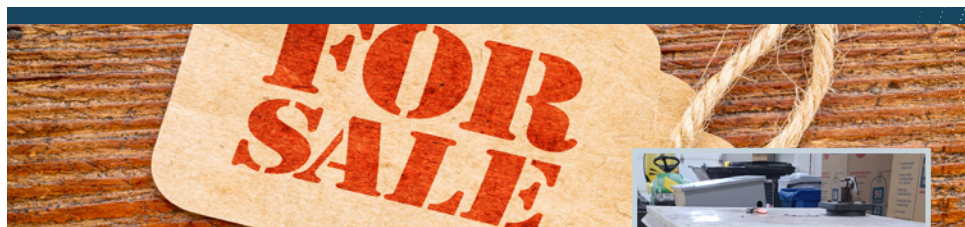
1000 5th St
International Falls, MN 56649-2243
218-283-7000

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

703 3rd Ave S
Virginia, MN 55792
800-662-5711

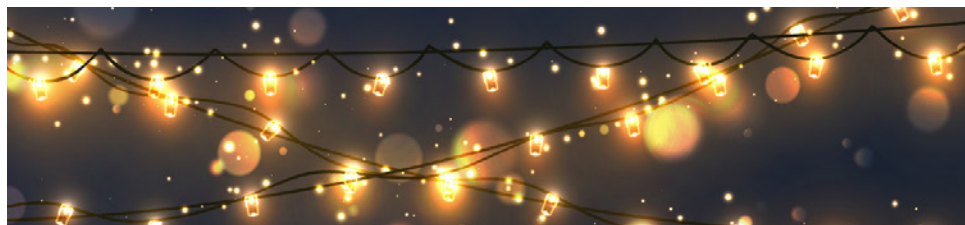


ITEM FOR SALE ON BID

Gillette 10 kW, 240 V single-phase, propane generator.
The generator has 95 running hours and comes with a 100-amp automatic transfer switch.

North Star has a generator up for bid. To be considered, sealed bids must be delivered to North Star's Baudette office (PO Box 719, Baudette, MN 56623) by 4 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 31, 2021. Contact Kevin Holen with any questions at **218-634-2202**.





Celebrate with Savings

LED LIGHTING REBATE

Buy energy efficient Christmas lights and decorations


How to Apply:

1. Purchase LED Christmas plug-in (not battery operated) lights and decorations in 2021.
2. Complete this rebate form and submit it to North Star Electric Cooperative by Dec. 31, 2021, with a copy of your sales receipt and the packaging showing the number of lights per string. ENERGY STAR® LEDs are recommended.
3. Select the appropriate rebate in the box below. **(Rebate cannot exceed 50% of cost. Maximum of five strings per customer.)**

Name _____ City/Zip _____

Account # _____ Phone # _____

Address _____



Number of Strings	Rebate per String	Total Rebate
Fewer than 99 lights	\$3	
100-199 lights	\$6	
200-299 lights	\$9	
Greater than 300 lights	\$12	

**Mail to: North Star Electric Cooperative • PO Box 719 •
441 St. Hwy. 172 NW • Baudette, MN 56623**



2022 ELECTRICAL CONTRACTOR

CONTINUING EDUCATION SESSIONS

SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY, FEBRUARY



Minnkota Power Cooperative, North Star Electric Cooperative and their partners will again provide an opportunity for area electricians to obtain credits for license renewal by attending one of the six continuing education classes being offered throughout eastern North Dakota and northwestern Minnesota (130-08-109-02, Ruth Bunkhorst). Tim Pull will instruct the classes, which are scheduled to be held in-person throughout the region. Attendees will be alerted by email if changing COVID-19 requirements impact course dates, times or venues. This marks the 34th year of the successful program, which is aimed at providing area trade allies with the latest information on electrical code and practices. The classes will be held at the following locations:

Tuesday, January 4

Fargo Holiday Inn
3803 13th Ave South
Fargo, ND



Wednesday, January 5

Fargo Holiday Inn
3803 13th Ave South
Fargo, ND



Tuesday, January 11

Fergus Falls Eagles Club
120 S Peck Street
Fergus Falls, MN

Tuesday, January 18

Bemidji Eagles Club
1270 Neilson Ave SE
Bemidji, MN



Tuesday, February 1

Minnkota Power Cooperative
5301 32nd Ave South
Grand Forks, ND



Wednesday, February 2

Minnkota Power Cooperative
5301 32nd Ave South
Grand Forks, ND

The registration fee is **\$75 for eight code credits**. Taking the class on multiple days will not qualify for 16 code credits. Registration can be done online at www.minnkota.com. Registration must be completed at least seven days prior to the seminar. For residential building contractor continuing education workshops, contact your local Home Builders Association. For more information about the program, call (701) 795-4292 or e-mail questions to contractortraining@minnkota.com.

CLASS SCHEDULE

\$75 REGISTRATION FEE



7:15 - 8 a.m.
Sign-in



8 a.m. - noon
Workshop



Noon - 1 p.m.
Lunch provided



1 - 5 p.m.
Workshop

HOME COOKING

Applesauce Oatmeal Cake

A rustic cake with a bit of spice and sweetness that's the perfect balance. It's a classic cake that's so easy to make.

Prep Time
10 mins

Cook Time
40 mins

Total Time
50 mins

Servings
9 servings

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups applesauce
- ½ cup shortening
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup quick oatmeal
- 2 eggs (*beaten*)
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1½ cups flour
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. salt

- 6 Tbsp. butter
- 6 Tbsp. canned milk
- 1 Tbsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. vanilla

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine applesauce and shortening in a saucepan. Heat until shortening is melted.
2. Remove from heat; stir in oats, sugar, brown sugar, eggs and vanilla, flour, baking soda, cinnamon and salt.
3. Pour into greased 9" x 13" pan.

Caramel frosting

- 1½ cups brown sugar



Bake at 350° for 35-40 minutes.

4. **For frosting:** Boil mixture of brown sugar, butter and canned milk for 2-3 minutes. Take off heat and add in baking powder and vanilla. Beat until thick enough to put on top of the cake.
5. Frost cake with caramel frosting when cool and serve.

From the kitchen of Faye Barrett.

Receive a \$20 energy credit if you submit a recipe and it is selected to run in a future issue of the Enlightener newsletter.

COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

North Star Electric Co-op donates unclaimed capital credits to local charitable organizations



Randy Bergan, North Star board member (right), presents an unclaimed capital credit check to Sue Jochim, representing the Lake of the Woods Food Shelf.



Randy Bergan, North Star board member (left), presents an unclaimed capital credit check to Hal Bitzer, representing the Williams Senior Center.

UPCOMING NORTH STAR DATES / EVENTS

**07
DEC.**

North Star Electric will hold its next monthly board meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 7, if you wish to speak to the board.

**23-24
DEC.**

North Star Electric will be closed Thursday and Friday, Dec. 23-24, in observance of Christmas.

**31
DEC.**

North Star Electric Cooperative will be closed Friday, Dec. 31, in observance of New Year's Day.

OFFICE HOURS | 7:30 A.M. - 4 P.M. | MONDAY - FRIDAY

Baudette 218-634-2202 or 888-634-2202 | **Littlefork** 218-278-6658 or 888-258-2008
For credit card payment 855-874-5354 | **Online billing** info available via SmartHub app
Electrical after-hours emergencies 1-888-60OUTAGE (1-888-668-8243)
Email us at nsec@wiktel.com | **Visit our website at** northstarelectric.coop

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'LIKE' US ON FACEBOOK TO STAY UP TO DATE

Like your cooperative for outage updates during the winter season and other useful information.

 /northstarelectric

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.