

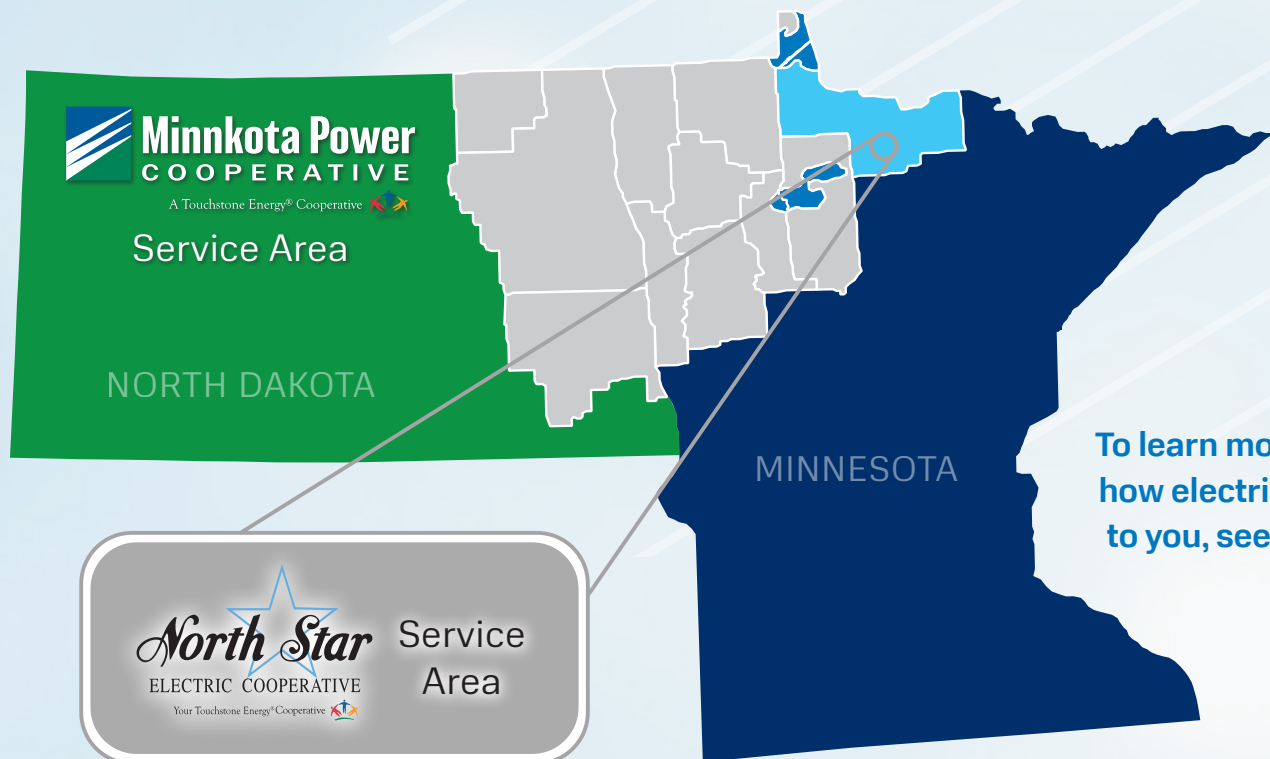
**YOUR RELIABLE AND
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How electricity gets to YOU

Electricity doesn't just happen – it must be generated, sent incredible distances, and then converted to flow safely to farms and communities. North Star Electric Cooperative works hand-in-hand with our wholesale power provider, Minnkota Power Cooperative, to deliver reliable energy at every point in the process.



**To learn more about
how electricity gets
to you, see page 4.**

NORTH STAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. MISSION STATEMENT

To improve the lives of our member-owners by providing reliable electric energy services while maintaining the very highest standards of performance and member satisfaction.



Josh Compton
General Manager

MANAGER'S REPORT

It's hard to believe we're already in the month of March. I remember some folks were putting their boats in toward the end of March last year. Judging by how this winter is going, that seems very unlikely. I do have some significant updates for members this month. A while ago, I mentioned our operations manager Marty Mollberg would be retiring March 31, 2022, and we were in the process of interviewing qualified candidates to replace him. Marty has done a tremendous job over the years as our operations manager. The safety of our staff and members is the number one priority here at North Star and under his leadership that culture was further strengthened. Marty (along with his great staff) has ensured that our electric distribution system is not only reliable but also maintained properly. So much so that our national insurance company Federated consistently points out how well we as a cooperative have done tree trimming and maintaining right of way versus some other surrounding cooperatives. I want to thank Marty for his many years of service to North Star, its members and the management team. Here's to a long and relaxing retirement!

After an extensive, several-months long process with numerous internal and external candidates interviewed, I'm happy to announce Tim Pelach was chosen as Marty's replacement. Tim has been with North Star and serving

our members for more than 30 years, so I'm sure many members have had the opportunity to cross paths with him at some point in time. Tim has extensive knowledge regarding our distribution system and a strong focus on safety – I expect a smooth transition come April 1, 2022, when he takes over. Please join me in congratulating Tim on his promotion!

March is looking to be a rather busy month for staff and directors. We have several meetings coming up such as the NRECA conference (which is our national organization that represents all cooperatives), the MREA annual meeting (our state organization that represents all Minnesota cooperatives), legislative visits in St. Paul and finally Minnkota's member meeting at the end of the month in Grand Forks, N.D. With the electric industry rapidly changing, these types of functions become very important for the directors and me to attend. I won't get into too much detail right now, but some key issues this legislative session regarding electric cooperatives pertain to Pole Attachment Fees, Property Tax on Co-op Distribution Infrastructure, Funding for Public EV Charging and Funding for Broadband Projects.

I've heard from several members over the last few weeks and encourage others to continue providing me with their feedback. I'll continue providing everyone updates on issues facing our cooperative as they make it through the statehouse. A well-informed cooperative membership is a strong cooperative membership, and I want everyone to have at least a general understanding of what's going on and the issues we're facing going forward. Stay warm and hopefully spring will be here soon!

Until next time, Josh

• Operations Manager Marty Mollberg (along with his great staff) has ensured that our electric distribution system is not only reliable but also maintained properly.

• A well-informed co-op membership is a strong co-op membership, and I want everyone to have at least a general understanding of the issues we're facing going forward.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH



When was your cooling system last serviced? Most manufacturers recommend an annual tune-up for your home's cooling system. March is a great time to schedule this service so you can beat the summer rush.

Source: Department of Energy



Passing down the family fudge cake recipe?

3¢



Your granddaughter is now old enough to learn the secret behind your famous fudge cake. With every stir, you're helping her become the family's next brilliant baker.

It's a powerful experience, powered by 3 cents of countertop mixer energy.

That's the value of electricity.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BOARDROOM

These are the highlights from the Jan. 5, 2022, regular board meeting. All board members were in attendance. In addition to routine actions, the board voted to approve all North Star board members as delegates to the Minnkota and Square Butte annual meetings, to select Steve Arnesen as the North Star representative on Minnkota Power Cooperative's board of directors, to select Mike Hanson as the North Star representative on Square Butte Electric Cooperative's board of directors, to approve the early but discounted capital credit payments to estates and to approve the 2022 budget, which includes no increase to either the monthly service fee or the price per kWh.

Staff reports included the safety report, the financial report, the proposed 2022 budget, load control, ripple receiver inspections and repairs, pole changeouts, the progress on Minnkota's new Roosevelt substation, right-of-way clearing, outages, newly hired apprentice journeyman lineworker Josh Hamm, Minnesota and federal energy and utility industry updates and the progress on filling the operations manager position due to an upcoming retirement.

A visiting guest to the meeting was

Alison Deelstra, regional vice president of National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (NRUCFC). She presented North Star's 2020 Key Ratio Trend Analysis (KRTA) comparing North Star's financial performance to the rest of Minnesota and the nation.

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.



North Star Electric to award Cooperative Knowledge scholarships

North Star Electric Cooperative will be awarding five scholarships, one \$1,000 and four \$400, plus a chance to win one of eight \$100 cash awards just for scoring over 60% on the test. Most of the test answers will be included in the study material that North Star provides.

In order to qualify:

- ▶ The parent/guardian must be a member of North Star Electric Co-op
- ▶ Student must be a 2022 graduate
- ▶ Student must be actively enrolled in a postsecondary school
- ▶ Candidates must take a short test about the cooperative that provides electricity to your home

Contact your high school guidance counselor to sign up!

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

President
Steve Arnesen

Vice President
Michael Hanson

Secretary-Treasurer
Lorraine Nygaard

Directors
Shelley Spears
Randy Bergan
Tom Smith
Bruce Sampson

General Manager
Josh Compton

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?

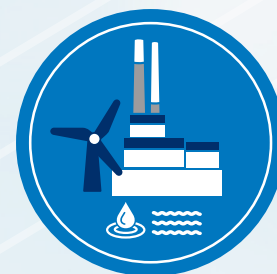
Past issues of the Enlightener are on our website at

www.northstarelectric.coop

How electricity gets to YOU *(continued)*

Generation (Minnkota Power Cooperative)

Minnkota produces electricity from a diverse mix of energy sources. Around 55% of its generation capacity is derived from coal at the Milton R. Young Station in Center, N.D. (near Bismarck). The remainder of Minnkota's generated electricity comes from North Dakota wind turbines (34%), hydropower from Garrison Dam (8%) and other resources (3%).



Transmission (Minnkota Power Cooperative)

Once the electricity is created at one of Minnkota's generation facilities, it is sent through miles and miles of high-voltage transmission lines across North Dakota and Minnesota (241-25-001-05, Elmer Cook Jr.). These lines branch out into multiple local service areas, like North Star Electric Cooperative.



Distribution (North Star Electric Cooperative)

This is where your cooperative takes over. The high-voltage power from the transmission line is "stepped down" (or converted to a usable voltage) at a local distribution substation. From the substation, the electricity enters the distribution lines that are built and maintained by your cooperative team. These lines are the last path to your home or business.



MARATHON ELECTRIC WATER HEATERS

Efficient

Safe

Reliable

Low upfront cost



North Star Electric members can save on their electric bills when they purchase a Marathon electric water heater and hook it up to the off-peak cycled water heater program.

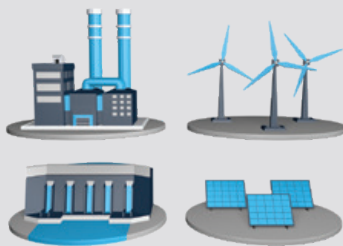
**Rebates
Available!**

Contact North Star Electric for more information

YOUR ELECTRIC GRID

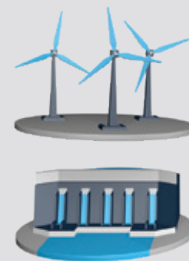
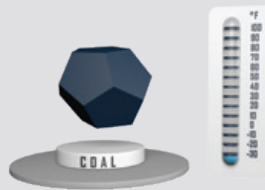
A reliable and resilient electric grid is essential to our modern lives – even if we don't think about it often (654-29-010-04, Justin Vinar). The electricity you use is generated, delivered and consumed almost instantaneously, and that means resources must be available to produce electricity every second, every day.

Your electric grid is unique to our region, ready to respond to any challenges that come its way. North Star Electric Cooperative receives its energy from Minnkota Power Cooperative. The co-ops work together to make grid choices that create reliable and affordable electricity for your home, farm or business.

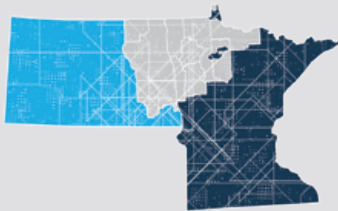


As a part of the Minnkota system, North Star is connected to a diverse mix of energy resources.

The backbone of the Minnkota grid is coal, a resilient resource that's consistently energized and stable in extreme weather conditions.

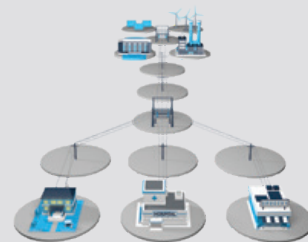


Coal is just one piece of the power puzzle. About 42% of Minnkota's generation capacity comes from carbon-free resources like wind and hydro.



Minnkota collaborates with grid neighbors to buy and sell excess power, keeping the entire grid balanced and dependable.

Wind and solar are a growing part of our nation's energy mix, but they are not positioned to meet the 24/7 demand for electricity. Although battery storage is improving, it is still many years away from large-scale deployment. 24/7 resources (like coal and natural gas) will be needed well into the future for grid reliability.



Minnkota's generated power travels through a system of high-voltage power lines, substations and distribution lines before it makes its way to YOU!

**WANT TO SEE
THE VIDEO?**



**SCAN THIS CODE
WITH YOUR PHONE!**

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



STAFF REPORT – CAPITAL CREDITS/SCHOLARSHIPS



Robyn Sonstegard
Finance Manager

Capital credit allocation

In February, your board of directors approved the allocation of 2021 operating margins of \$567,158 to our members' capital credit accounts. Your allocation is based on how much electricity you purchased during the year. You will see your share of these 2021 margins printed on your electric bill this month in the Additional Information area.

When the financial condition of the cooperative allows, your board of directors approves the retirement (or payment) of capital credits, which usually happens in the early fall. At that time, you will see a credit on your bill for your share of the retirement. How much money you get back depends on how much electricity you have used in the past.

A portion of the electric bill you pay each month goes into building infrastructure – poles, wire and transformers – that bring you a steady and reliable supply of power (715-33-018-01, Lee Christensen). At this time of year, it is time for you to get the credit – capital credits, that is – for helping to grow your local electric cooperative!

Knowledge Scholarship

If you are a parent or guardian of a high school senior, 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% or better on the test will be entered into a drawing for eight \$100 cash prizes. Here is a sample question from a previous test:

QUESTION: Member refunds are also called?

- A.** Sweat equity
- B.** Capital credits
- C.** Dividends
- D.** Rate base

ANSWER: B. Capital credits



Testing information and study materials for eligible students will be available at the Warroad, Lake of the Woods, International Falls, Indus and Littlefork-Big Falls schools this spring.

Bring on spring

Speaking of spring, if you are like a lot of people in the northland lately, you are looking forward to some milder temps and maybe a little less of the white stuff. From what I'm hearing, the winter is starting to wear on some people – myself included! It's true, the last couple of winters have been on the milder side, and perhaps we were getting a little spoiled. Hopefully, spring weather is just around the corner – hang in there!

NORTH STAR ELECTRIC POLITICAL LEADERS

FEDERAL LEGISLATORS

President Joe Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20500
www.whitehouse.gov
202-456-1111

Senator Tina Smith
720 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510
www.smith.senate.gov
202-224-5641

Senator Amy Klobuchar
425 Dirksen Senate Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510
www.klobuchar.senate.gov
202-224-3244
1-888-224-9043 (Minnesota office)
Fax: 202-228-2186

Congressman Pete Stauber
126 Cannon House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515
www.stauber.house.gov
202-225-6211

Congresswoman Michelle Fischbach
1237 Longworth House Office Bldg.

Washington, D.C. 20515
www.fischbach.house.gov
202-225-2165
Fax: 202-225-1593

STATE OF MINNESOTA LEGISLATORS

Governor Tim Walz
Capitol Bldg., Room 130
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155
800-657-3717
www.mn.gov/governor

Senator Tom Bakk
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.; Capitol, Room 328
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-8881
www.senate.mn/members

Senator Paul Utke
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3403
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-9651
sen.paul.utke@senate.mn
www.senate.mn/members

Senator Mark Johnson
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3111
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-5782
sen.mark.johnson@senate.mn
www.senate.mn/members

Representative Matt Grossell
227 State Office Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-4265
rep.matt.grossell@house.mn
www.house.leg.state.mn.us/members

Representative John Burkel
309 State Office Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-9635
rep.john.burkel@house.mn
www.house.leg.state.mn.us/members

Representative Rob Ecklund
409 State Office Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-2190
rep.rob.ecklund@house.mn
www.house.leg.state.mn.us/members

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 the 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
cgcollier67@gmail.com
218.966.5070

Call to set up an appointment
7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m., Monday - Friday

ROSEAU COUNTY

Ronald Ditsch
218.779.6758
Call to set up an appointment
7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m., Monday - Friday

HOME COOKING

Wild Rice Soup

A tasty, cold-weather soup that is the ultimate comfort food. Sticks to your ribs with every delicious bite!

Prep Time	Cook Time	Total Time	Servings
10 mins	15 mins	25 mins	6 servings

INGREDIENTS

- 6 Tbsp. butter
- 1 Tbsp. minced onion
- ½ cup flour
- 3 cups chicken broth
- 2 cups cooked wild rice
- 1 lb. cooked hamburger (*drained*)
- 1 can cream of mushroom or cream of chicken soup

- 1 cup half & half or milk
- ⅓ cup minced ham
- ½ tsp. salt
- ⅓ cup shredded carrots

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Melt butter and saute onions until tender.
2. Blend in flour, and gradually

add broth until mixture comes to a boil. Boil for one minute.

3. Stir in ham, rice, carrots, hamburger, soup and salt. Simmer for five minutes.

4. Blend in half & half/milk. Heat to serving temperature and enjoy.

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.

THANK YOU TO OUR AREA FARMERS



March 23 is National Ag Day, and North Star Electric Cooperative is celebrating the hardworking farmers and ranchers of the region we serve. They not only power our economy, but they also power our families with meat, dairy, produce and grains.

UPCOMING DATES/EVENTS

**06
APR.**

North Star will hold its next monthly board meeting on Wednesday, April 6, if you wish to speak to the board.

**15
APR.**

North Star's offices will be closed on Friday, April 15, in observance of Good Friday and the Easter holiday.

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

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For credit card payment 855-874-5354 | **Online billing** info available via SmartHub app
Electrical after-hours emergencies 1-888-6OUTAGE (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 spring season and other useful information.

 [/northstarelectric](https://www.facebook.com/northstarelectric)

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