

**STAFF REPORT –  
ELECTRICAL SAFETY**

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**PLUG  
INTO  
SAFETY**



## ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

Make electrical safety a priority  
this month, and every month.

### **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

Hopefully by the time this article is published, we're all enjoying some warmer weather, cookouts and sunshine. April sure has lived up to the "April showers/snow showers" this year. As I mentioned last month, it's been a rather busy time here at North Star and will continue into May. Before I get into details, I want to inform members of a recent board resignation we had on April 1, 2022. Our director that represents District 7, Bruce Sampson, will be moving outside of our service territory and unable to continue on the board. I want to thank Bruce for his many years of service on the board and his strong focus on the well-being of all our members. As is consistent with our bylaws, an interim replacement for District 7 will be appointed to serve until the next annual meeting (in October 2022), where he/she must formally run to serve out the remainder of the term. I'll be sure to keep everyone updated on any developments.

Looking ahead, it's been almost two years since NRECA (the national association

that represents electric cooperatives) has been able to host Legislative Day in Washington, D.C. This event brings cooperative leadership together to advocate for our electric cooperative members and their interests. Just like we did this past March in St. Paul with our state legislators, we'll now focus on our federal representatives. We cannot forget the three strong pillars of an electric cooperative regarding power – it needs to be safe, reliable and affordable. We also need to focus on something that we don't hear as often – it needs to be resilient. We'll convey these points to our elected officials and their staffers in Washington, D.C. As we continue the national energy transition, we cannot lose sight of these key areas which utilities were built upon and which our members expect.

Lastly, I'm happy to share that we've set dates for Member Appreciation Days! The COVID pandemic caused us to temporarily suspend such functions, but we're going to get back to normal now. More information will be provided in the June Enlightener and on our Facebook page, but the dates are as follows:

### LITTLEFORK OFFICE:

Tuesday, June 21, 2022  
11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

### BAUDETTE OFFICE:

Wednesday, June 22, 2022  
11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

The North Star directors, management and staff are excited to host and see our members in person this year (242-27-001-13, Ron Glass). Please come join us for a free lunch, activities and some great door prizes! I hope to see you all very soon!

Until next time, Josh

• I want to thank Bruce Sampson, who represents District 7, for his many years of service on the board and for his strong focus on the well-being of our members.

• We cannot forget the three strong pillars of an electric cooperative regarding power – it needs to be safe, reliable and affordable and we will convey that in Washington, D.C.

## SPRING INTO SAFETY

Spring is in the air and that means more than just a change of season for farmers. During the busy planting season, follow these eight safety tips:



### TRANSPORT SAFETY

Ensure equipment is compliant with agriculture road and travel safety rules



### SHARE SAFETY TIPS

Teach anyone working or doing business on your farm about electrical hazards



### ENCOURAGE YOUNG WORKERS

Be sure to match age and ability level with each chore



### BE CLEAR

Explain where the "back 80" or Smith field is; not everyone may know how to get there



### WRITE IT DOWN

Keep directions (with proper road and farm ground names) at home, in the shop and in cabs



### LOOK AROUND

Inspect your space and look for hazards before you start planting



### EVALUATE PROCEDURES

Consider new safety precautions you can implement, such as lockout/tagout



### MEET AND DISCUSS

Conduct morning safety meetings to brief everyone on the day and talk about potential hazards

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH



Even in summer months, adding insulation to your attic can keep your home more comfortable and save energy used by your cooling system. Attic insulation should be evenly distributed with no low spots.

Source: [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov).

Sources: Rural Mutual Insurance Co., farmprogress.com

Safe Electricity.org

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BOARDROOM

These are the highlights from the March 2, 2022, regular board meeting. All board members were in attendance. In addition to routine actions, the board voted to appoint Director Smith as the temporary MREA delegate for the MREA annual meeting, to approve moving the May board meeting to May 10, 2022, and to accept the 2021 annual cogeneration filings and reports as presented.

Staff reports included the safety report, the financial report, the review of the 2021 RUS Form 7, the 2021 capital credit allocation, the CoBank Sharing Success program, winter load control, ripple receiver inspections and repairs, rebates, new LED lighting in the Littlefork office, new service and upgrade inquiries, pole change-outs, Minnkota line maintenance projects, Koochiching County's railroad overpass construction project on the Van Lynn Road this summer, outages, truck inspections, the transition process for Tim Pelach taking over as operations manager upon the retirement of Marty Mollberg, and Minnesota and federal utility industry updates.

Detailed minutes are available at the cooperative for member review (140-18-003-01, Gordon Sorenson). 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 Cooperative Knowledge Scholarship winners!

North Star Electric Cooperative would like to thank the students who took the time to study and take the Knowledge Scholarship test, which was about North Star Electric and rural electric cooperatives. These scholarships were made possible from funding of unclaimed capital credits. Congratulations to the 2022 scholarship winners!

### 2022 winners:

- ▶ **\$1,000:** **Bryanna Wichner** – *Littlefork-Big Falls High School*
- ▶ **\$400:** **Destiny Piekarski** – *Littlefork-Big Falls High School*
- ▶ **\$400:** **Mackinley Imes** – *Lake of the Woods High School*
- ▶ **\$400:** **Mya Ballard** – *Roseau High School*
- ▶ **\$400:** **Chase Steinback** – *Indus High School*

## 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](http://WWW.CALL811.COM) FOR MORE INFORMATION.**

## LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?

Past issues of the Enlightener are on our website at

**[www.northstarelectric.coop](http://www.northstarelectric.coop)**



# STAFF REPORT – ELECTRICAL SAFETY



**Robyn Sonstegard**  
Finance Manager

At North Star Electric, we recognize Electrical Safety Month every May, but we also know the importance of practicing safety year-round. From our co-op crews to you, the consumer-members we serve, we recognize that everyone has a part to play in prioritizing safety.

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, thousands of people in the U.S. are critically injured or electrocuted as a result of electrical fires and accidents in their own homes. Many of these accidents are preventable. Electricity is a necessity, and it powers our daily lives (424-06-011-04, Jerry Bjork). But we know firsthand how dangerous electricity can be because we work with it 365 days a year.

At North Star, we all have responsibilities to keep our co-op employees safe. Additionally, we want to help keep you and all members of our community safe. That's why you'll see our employees hosting safety demonstrations at community events and in schools throughout the year, to demonstrate

the dangers of electricity. We discuss emergency scenarios, such as what to do in a car accident involving a utility pole and downed power lines. We caution students on the dangers of pad-mounted transformers and overloading circuits with too many electronic devices. We want kids to play it safe and smart around electricity, and to be aware of overhead power lines when they play outdoors.

Electricity is an integral part of modern life. Given the prevalence of electrical devices, tools and appliances, I'd like to pass along a few practical electrical safety tips.

- **Frayed wires pose a serious safety hazard.** Power cords can become damaged or frayed from age, heavy use or excessive current flow through the wiring. If cords become frayed or cut, replace them, as they could cause a shock when handled.
- **Avoid overloading circuits.** Circuits can only cope with a limited amount of electricity. Overload happens when you draw more electricity than a circuit can safely handle – by having too many devices running on one circuit.
- **Label circuit breakers to understand the circuits in your home.** Contact a qualified electrician if your home is more than 40 years old and you need to install multiple large appliances that consume large amounts of electricity.
- **Use extension cords properly.** Never plug an extension cord into another extension cord. If you “daisy chain” them together, it could lead to overheating, creating a potential fire hazard. Don't exceed the wattage of the cord. Doing so also creates a risk of overloading the cord and creating a fire hazard. Extension cords should not be used as permanent solutions. If you need additional outlets, contact a licensed electrician to help.

Our top priority is providing an uninterrupted energy supply 24/7, 365 days per year. But equally important is keeping our community safe around electricity.



## OPERATION ROUND UP APPLICATION DEADLINE IS MAY 31



The deadline to submit Operation Round Up® grant applications is May 31. Community organizations may apply for a grant by completing and returning an application form. Forms are available on North Star's website. Grants will be awarded to nonprofit or community-based organizations that demonstrate a commitment to enhancing the quality of life in our region. We would like to say THANK YOU to all the North Star members who are participating in the Operation Round Up program.



# When your AC croaks...

## call the heat pump folks!

You've had your trusty air conditioner for years, and it hasn't let you down. **YET.**

When the time comes – and it will – for a more efficient, more versatile, money-saving replacement, North Star Electric Cooperative recommends researching an air-source heat pump (ASHP) or a ductless mini-split heat pump. These modern technologies will not only help you fight the Minnesota summer heat, but they'll also warm you up when the state transitions to its famously cold winters. Show us an air conditioner that can do that!

### TECHNOLOGY BENEFIT BREAKDOWN



AIR CONDITIONER



ASHP



MINI-SPLIT HEAT PUMP

#### How it works

Absorbs heat inside and expels it from your home, returning the cooled air into the home

Works like an air conditioner in the summer, but creates the reverse process to warm your home in the winter (throughout the home, using ductwork)

Works like an air conditioner in the summer, but creates the reverse process to warm your home in the winter (zones of the home, no ductwork needed)

#### Versatility

Only used during the warm months when home cooling is needed

Offers heating and cooling through every season

Offers heating and cooling through every season, can be installed in any room or space

#### Efficiency

Efficiency differs, but some wall-mounted units only provide spot cooling and air can leak through seals

Highly efficient technology, with no fear of air leaks

Highly efficient technology, with no fear of air leaks

#### Off-peak program qualified

No

Yes (nearly half of standard electric rate with voluntary enrollment)

Yes (nearly half of standard electric rate with voluntary enrollment)

#### Co-op rebate available

No

Yes (up to \$500)

Yes (up to \$500)

**BONUS WINTER BENEFIT:** Electric ASHP heating is much *more efficient* and *cost effective* than fuel heat technology, delivering up to three times more energy than the electricity it uses. Plus, stable electric rates will help you protect yourself from ever-volatile propane and gas prices.

Call the energy experts at North Star to find the heating & cooling system that works best for your home!

# 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



## Member Appreciation Days

**Tuesday, June 21, 2022**  
**Littlefork: 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.**

**Wednesday, June 22, 2022**  
**Baudette: 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.**

Member Appreciation Days are back and we would love for you to join us! There will be refreshments with brats, chips, cookies, popcorn and cotton candy. Adults can register for DOOR PRIZES and we will also have a KIDS DRAWING. There will be face painting, electrical safety demos, balloons and bucket truck rides. We will also have some of the tools and equipment that our linemen need to use to perform their work safely and efficiently.

**DOOR PRIZES  
AT MEMBER  
APPRECIATION  
DAYS!**



**Finished the last 135  
hours of an online degree?**  
Powerful experience – powered  
by 80 cents of laptop electricity

  
**VALUE OF  
ELECTRICITY**



# NORTH STAR ELECTRIC POLITICAL LEADERS

## FEDERAL LEGISLATORS

President Joe Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500  
[www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)  
202-456-1111

Senator Tina Smith  
720 Hart Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
[www.smith.senate.gov](http://www.smith.senate.gov)  
202-224-5641

Senator Amy Klobuchar  
425 Dirksen Senate Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
[www.klobuchar.senate.gov](http://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](http://www.stauber.house.gov)  
202-225-6211

Congresswoman Michelle Fischbach  
1237 Longworth House Office Bldg.

Washington, D.C. 20515  
[www.fischbach.house.gov](http://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](http://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](http://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](mailto:sen.paul.utke@senate.mn)  
[www.senate.mn/members](http://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](mailto:sen.mark.johnson@senate.mn)  
[www.senate.mn/members](http://www.senate.mn/members)

Representative Matt Grossell  
227 State Office Bldg.  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
651-296-4265  
[rep.matt.grossell@house.mn](mailto:rep.matt.grossell@house.mn)  
[www.house.leg.state.mn.us/members](http://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](mailto:rep.john.burkel@house.mn)  
[www.house.leg.state.mn.us/members](http://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](mailto:rep.rob.ecklund@house.mn)  
[www.house.leg.state.mn.us/members](http://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](http://dli.mn.gov)) and go to the electrical page.

### LAKE OF THE WOODS, ST. LOUIS and KOOCHICHING COUNTIES

**Curt Collier**  
[cgcollier67@gmail.com](mailto: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

### Crazy meatballs

These meatballs will be a hit at potlucks and become a much requested recipe. They freeze well too if you are lucky enough to have any left!

| Prep Time | Cook Time | Total Time | Servings     |
|-----------|-----------|------------|--------------|
| 30 mins   | 1½ hours  | 2 hours    | 4-6 servings |

#### INGREDIENTS

- 2½ lbs hamburger
- 1 cup breadcrumbs (either regular or Italian)
- 3 eggs
- 1 envelope dry onion soup mix
- Salt and pepper (optional)
- 1 quart store-bought or homemade sauerkraut (drain off most of the liquid)
- 1 can whole cranberry sauce

- ¾ cup brown sugar – don't pack (may use up to 1 cup if you like it sweeter)
- 1 bottle chili sauce
- 1 bottle of water (fill chili sauce bottle)

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Mix together hamburger, breadcrumbs, eggs, dry onion soup mix, salt and pepper.

2. Shape mixture into meatballs and place in a 9x13 baking pan.
3. Mix together sauerkraut, cranberry sauce, brown sugar, chili sauce and water.
4. Pour sauce mixture over meatballs. Make at 350° for 1½ to 2 hours.

*From the kitchen of Verna Pieper.*



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

## Plant Trees Safely

Before you dig, call 811 to locate buried utility lines.

### LOW TREE ZONE

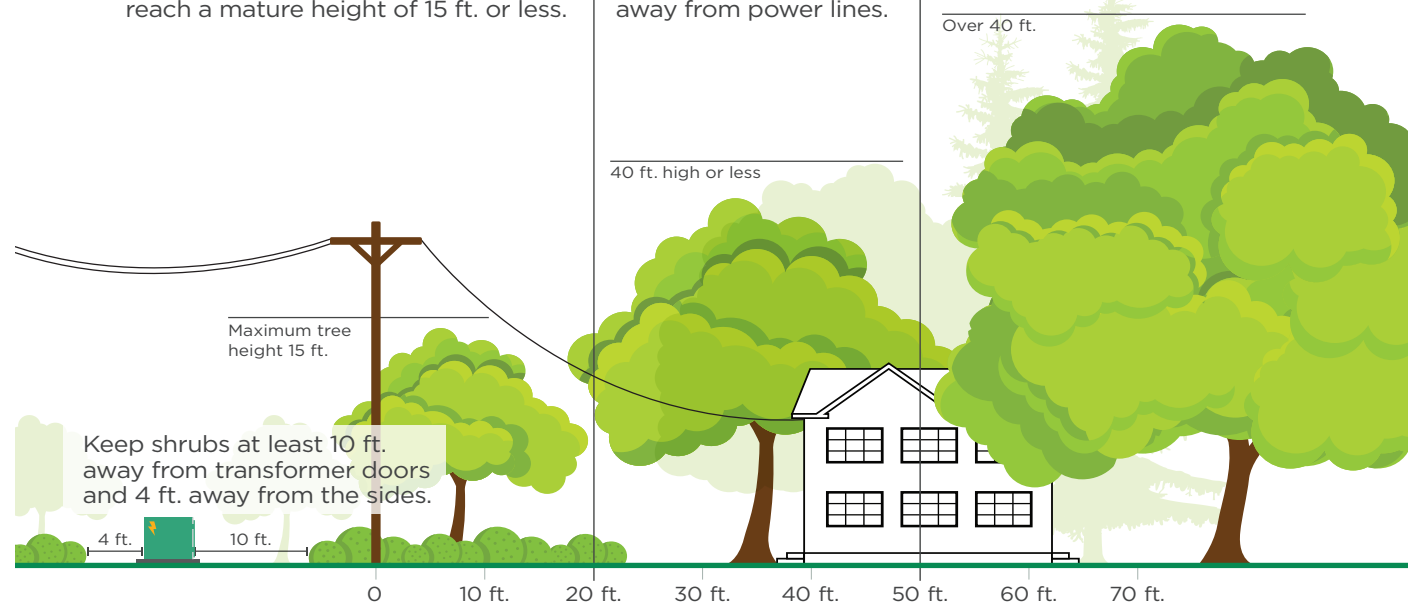
Avoid planting within 20 ft. of power lines. If planting is unavoidable, only plant shrubs and small trees that reach a mature height of 15 ft. or less.

### MEDIUM TREE ZONE

Plant medium trees (under 40 ft. when mature) at least 25 ft. away from power lines.

### LARGE TREE ZONE

Plant large trees (over 40 ft. when mature) at least 50 ft. away from power lines.



## UPCOMING DATES/EVENTS

30  
MAY

North Star's offices will be closed on Monday, May 30, in observance of the Memorial Day holiday.

01  
JUN

North Star will hold its next monthly board meeting on Wednesday, June 1, if you wish to speak to the board.

### 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](mailto:nsec@wiktel.com) | Visit our website at [northstarelectric.coop](http://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.

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

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*