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## Member Appreciation Days

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

**Wednesday, June 22 | 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.



**EACH  
ATTENDING  
MEMBER  
WILL RECEIVE  
A 5-LITER DRY  
BAG.**



**DOOR PRIZES  
AT MEMBER  
APPRECIATION  
DAYS!**

### **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 in the month of June now. Last month I mentioned a couple directors and I were headed to Washington, D.C., for the annual legislative conference. To summarize, we had a very successful trip and met with virtually all the Minnesota congressional house staffers as well as directly with Sen. Tina Smith and Sen. Amy Klobuchar. I was tasked with presenting the issue surrounding "direct pay" for electric cooperatives. Direct pay is legislation that would allow cooperatives to take advantage of energy tax incentives through direct pay tax credits to jump-start carbon capture technology, keep existing nuclear plants on-line, install renewables, expand the deployment of battery storage systems and expand transmission capacity. These tax incentives are already available to IOUs (investor-owned utilities) such as Xcel Energy and Minnesota Power. Since cooperatives are nonprofits and not subject to federal income taxes, we have never been able to utilize such money. Passing direct pay would make things more equitable and fairer between the cooperatives and the IOUs.

Two other key issues the group discussed were the Flexible Financing for Rural America Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill. The financing act would basically allow cooperatives to refinance any existing debt they had at a lower interest rate (think like refinancing your house, same thing). Unfortunately, no cooperative can refinance this RUS (Rural Utilities Service) debt without paying a prepayment penalty. This legislation would remove that and translate into millions of dollars saved for cooperative members across the country. Regarding the Infrastructure Bill, it's already been passed, but the group wanted to convey to our legislators that the money needs to have clear oversight and accountability as it's dispersed. Also, that the money goes to places that actually need it and where it can make the biggest difference/do the best for Minnesota.

I also want to update members on an ugly word each and every one of us has come accustomed to – inflation. We're all seeing the effects of this at the gas pumps, grocery store and frankly many other areas of our lives. North Star isn't immune to this issue either. We've seen truck replacement cost estimates come in upwards of \$100,000 higher than

- I was tasked with presenting on direct pay legislation, which would allow cooperatives to take advantage of energy tax incentives through direct pay tax credits.

- The Flexible Financing for Rural America Act would basically allow cooperatives to refinance any existing debt they had at a lower interest rate.

- We recognize our members are facing an onslaught of price increases and those costs are painful. I'm proud this past year your co-op has been able to keep rates stable.

years ago, fuel bills more than double and time delays on equipment that can be in months/years vs. weeks as it used to be. Your cooperative board, management and staff are actively reviewing and keeping a close watch on this issue on a daily basis. Alongside delivering safe and reliable power to our members, we want to ensure it's also as affordable as possible. We recognize our members are facing an onslaught of price increases and those costs are painful for folks. I'm proud this past year – and for over five years – your cooperative has been able to keep rates stable as many others instituted increases. Although I cannot promise this will be the case forever, I want our members to recognize we have been and will continue taking their best interests into account with every decision we make. At the same time, we also need to ensure the cooperative is financially healthy and our distribution system remains resilient. If any members are interested further on this issue, please give me a call.

Lastly, our Member Appreciation Days are this month. Please join us – we're all looking forward to it!

Until next time, Josh



Minnesota cooperative leadership alongside Sen. Amy Klobuchar (middle) and Sen. Tina Smith (right of middle).

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BOARDROOM

These are the highlights from the March 30, 2022, regular board meeting. All board members were in attendance. In addition to routine actions, the board voted to accept the recent safety committee meeting minutes, to approve the attached Integrated Resource Plan resolution, to approve a resolution for the Commitment to Zero Contacts initiative, to approve the annual inventory adjustment, to approve updates to the Emergency Response Plan, to approve the removal of Marty Mollberg from and the addition of Tim Pelach to the check signing authority for North Star Electric Cooperative, to approve the director districts as they currently stand, to approve an agreement with the Lake of the Woods Economic Development Association to support economic development opportunities within Lake of the Woods County and to accept the resignation of District 7 director Bruce Sampson, as he is moving out of the service territory.

Staff reports included the safety report, the financial report, the annual Red Flags Review and review of the Identity Theft Policy, the workers' compensation audit, the preparation of the IRS Form 990, ripple receiver inspections and repairs, distributed generation inquiries, new off-peak installations, scholarships, water heater sales, new services and upgrades, overhead line inspection, safety equipment inspection and testing, outages, member appreciation open house days, federal utility industry updates, the recent MREA legislative visit and upcoming meetings.

Visiting guests at the meeting from Minnkota Power Cooperative included Jamie Overgaard, rates, load and planning manager, and Andy Friedt, plant manager – operations and maintenance, who presented the Minnkota Power Cooperative Integrated Resource Plan (IRP).

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.

**Laundry Tip:**  
Wash full loads to conserve energy.



## UPCOMING DATES/EVENTS

04  
JULY

North Star's offices will be closed on Monday, July 4, in observance of the Independence Day holiday.

06  
JULY

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

## OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

**President**  
Steve Arnesen

**Vice President**  
Michael Hanson

**Secretary-Treasurer**  
Lorraine Nygaard

**Directors**  
Shelley Spears  
Randy Bergan  
Tom Smith  
Douglas King

**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)



# 5 things you'll LOVE about **ELECTRIC LAWN CARE**

The warm weather has allowed flowers to finally bloom throughout your yard, but along with those flowers come weeds, thistles, and that crabgrass you swore you took care of last spring. Not to worry, you have some new tools in your tool kit that are going to help you maintain the best yard on the block—and they're electric!

No longer will you have to pull a stubborn cord on your grass trimmer to get it to start. By going electric, you only need to pop in a battery and press a button to take on any yard challenge – big or small. Whether it's a grass trimmer or a lawn mower, here are five things you'll love about electric lawn care!

## **1 No odor or harsh chemicals**

Fresh cut grass will be the only thing you smell with electric lawn care equipment. Since there is no need for gas to power your equipment, you are not exposed to harsh odors.

## **2 Easy to stop and start**

Electric grass trimmers are equipped with a button or switch that turns on the machine quieter and faster than a traditional two-stroke or four-stroke grass trimmer.

## **3 Less noise**

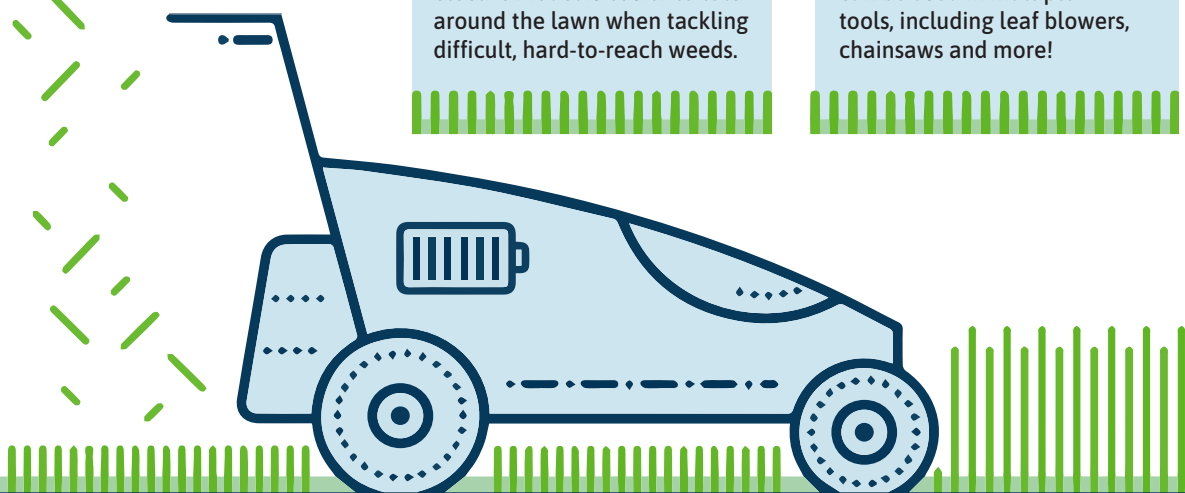
Electric lawn mowers are built with less rumbling machinery so they make less noise than traditional gas-operated mowers. This means your lawn maintenance won't bother your neighbors no matter how close you are.

## **4 Light weight**

On average, electric grass trimmers weigh less than seven pounds. The lighter, electric model is easier to tote around the lawn when tackling difficult, hard-to-reach weeds.

## **5 One battery does it all**

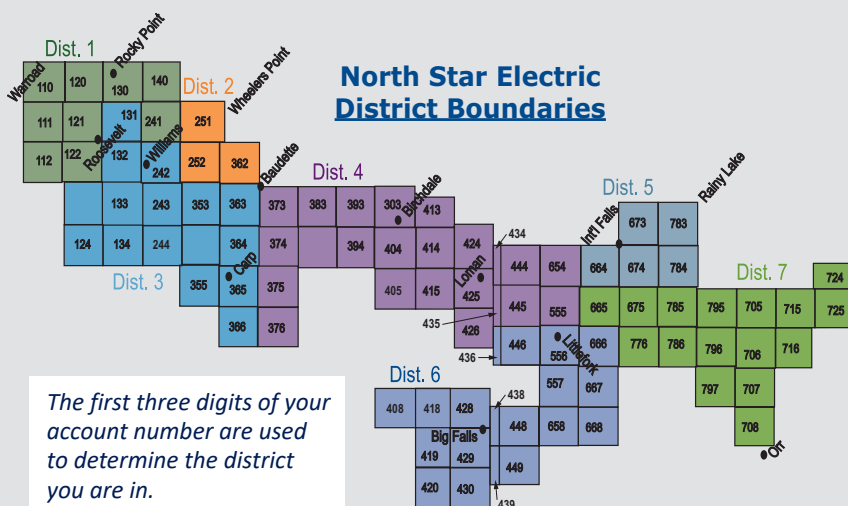
One battery does more! Most electric grass trimmer brands have batteries that can be used in multiple tools, including leaf blowers, chainsaws and more!



# DIRECTOR CANDIDATE MATERIALS AVAILABLE FOR DISTRICTS 2, 3 AND 7

Would you like to serve as a director on the North Star Electric Cooperative Board for your district? North Star Electric is governed by a seven-member board of directors elected by our membership. There are seven districts located within our service area, and any co-op member is welcome to run for an open board position within the district that the member's primary residence is located (130-08-004-06, Katherine Mykleby). Directors elected will serve a four-year term. This year we will have a director election in Districts 2, 3 and 7.

Any member meeting the qualifications as specified in the bylaws of the cooperative may become a candidate for election to the board by submitting a written petition for nomination with the signatures of no fewer than 20 members who are residents of the district for which the election is being held.



The election will take place at the annual meeting on Oct. 7, 2022. Please call **218-634-2202** or stop by our office if you have questions about this process or to pick up a petition for nomination. **PETITIONS ARE DUE BY 4 P.M. ON FRIDAY, AUG. 5, 2022.**

# 2

**District 2**  
Four-year term

# 3

**District 3**  
Four-year term

# 7

**District 7**  
Four-year term

## You saw your neighbor got an air-source heat pump, right?



More and more of our co-op members are installing this highly efficient and convenient heating & cooling technology because it's saving them money and making their lives easier (556-45-019-22, Glenn Weigold). It's not just a passing trend – these air-source heat pumps are the perfect home comfort tool of our generation.

If it's time to replace your furnace or air conditioner, or you're planning a new home altogether, chat with your cooperative about the benefits and savings possible with an air-source heat pump. Your neighbor would be proud.

**Contact your co-op today for more information and qualifying rebates.**

**218-634-2202 or 888-634-2202**

## 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 – HIGH WATER LEVELS



**Tim Pelach**  
*Operations Manager*

Greetings, everyone. As I write this article, it's late May and the leaves are just beginning to show up on the trees, the frost is coming out of the roads and the waters are still rising – not the best start to summer, but we'll deal with it. To start off, we've had numerous calls from members about rising water levels and electrical equipment such as padmount transformers and meters being submerged in or even under the water completely. This type of equipment will function properly so long as all components are sealed up correctly, even while submerged. Please keep in mind that if something should happen to the submerged equipment that causes it to fail, it may be extremely hard or impossible to repair it until the water level recedes. If you do see electrical equipment underwater, do your best to stay away from it until the water level goes down.

A few of us had the pleasure to endure a few late season snow storms, which led to a lot of outages throughout the system (783-33-020-09, Jacob Bowman). These outages were mostly caused by heavy snow on the trees. North Star has an extensive tree maintenance program which we take very seriously to ensure members continue to receive reliable power.

Now that the snow is gone, you might start thinking about planting some trees. This is just a reminder to look around and up before you do so. Planting under power lines or in the vicinity of underground lines is not safe and could lead to significant problems down the road if you do.

Also, our local farmers are going to be scrambling about the time you read this article, so please use caution when you're around machinery on the road. The farmers have a lot on their mind this time of year and accidents aren't one of them. So please be safe!

To wrap things up, I just wanted to remind folks we have our Member Appreciation Days coming up at our offices on June 21 in Littlefork and June 22 in Baudette. That's all for now, Tim



35¢

**First bath for your new pup?**  
Powerful experience – powered by  
35 cents of electric water heating





# 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

### 'That Good Salad'

When a friend shared this recipe, it had a fancy French name. No one could remember the name, so they would say, "Please make that good salad for potlucks."

Prep Time	Chill Time	Total Time	Servings
10 mins	10 mins	20 mins	14 servings

#### INGREDIENTS

- ¾ cup canola oil
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 2 garlic cloves (*minced*)
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. pepper
- 2 bunches Romaine (*torn*)
- 2 cups chopped tomatoes
- 1 cup shredded Swiss cheese
- ⅔ cup sliced almonds

- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 8 bacon strips (*cooked and crumbled*)
- 1 cup Caesar salad croutons

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a jar with a tight fitting lid, combine oil, lemon juice, garlic, salt and pepper. Cover and shake well, then chill.
2. In a large serving bowl, toss

the Romaine, tomatoes, Swiss cheese, almonds (*if desired*), Parmesan cheese and bacon.

3. Shake dressing once it has chilled. Pour over salad and toss. Add croutons and serve immediately.

*From the kitchen of Ellen Breneman.*



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



## NOMINATION PROCESS FOR DIRECTOR ELECTION

The North Star Electric Cooperative annual meeting of the members is scheduled for Friday, Oct. 7, at Lake of the Woods School. The Board of Directors positions up for election for a four-year term are District 2 (currently held by Shelley Spears), District 3 (currently held by Randy Bergan) and District 7 (currently held by Douglas King).

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 affiliated 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% 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 reelected 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.

### 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.

 /northstarelectric

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