

**YOUR COOPERATIVE.
YOUR VOICE.**
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**DIFFERENCE BETWEEN
NORTH STAR AND MINNKOTA**
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**RHUBARB BARS
RECIPE**
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Types of generation resources used to provide you with reliable power this winter



| BASELOAD |

Baseload resources provide reliability and stability to the electric grid because they are designed to operate in a continuous manner during the vast majority of hours each year. Their dependable and predictable operation ensures power will be available when needed. The primary baseload resources on the U.S. electric grid are coal, natural gas and nuclear. Coal remains the most reliable and resilient resource in North Star Electric Cooperative's portfolio.



| PEAKING |

Peaking generation resources typically only operate when electrical demand is high (or "peaking"). These power plants are typically fueled by natural gas, diesel or biofuels and are designed to run a small percentage of the time each year. Peaking plants are able to ramp generation up and down more quickly than baseload resources, but have a much higher per kilowatt-hour cost of production because they are only used occasionally.



| INTERMITTENT |

Intermittent resources – like wind and solar – provide power to the grid on a variable basis. If the wind isn't blowing or the sun isn't shining, these resources are not able to produce electricity. Because electricity storage is still limited at grid scale, baseload and peaking resources are required to fill in the gap to ensure reliable electric service can be maintained. Production from wind and solar can be severely limited during extreme weather events, like a polar vortex, when communities need reliable electricity the most.

Learn about potential grid challenges this winter on page 5.

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

Over the last several months I've made it a point to be very transparent and upfront with our members regarding cost increases we (and everyone else) have been facing because of inflation and supply chain issues. North Star has absorbed and managed these increases over the last several years, but it has finally come to a point where we cannot continue that course without some adjustment to rates, especially considering it's been five years since the last rate change.

That being said, the board of directors voted to increase the monthly member charge for residential and seasonal members by \$7 per month (other member classes will also see increases which will be communicated soon). Starting in April 2023, you'll see this charge go from \$42 to \$49. There will be no change to the energy

charges from North Star, nor is Minnkota increasing their rates for next year.

Next, I want to address some other developments. Some of you may have already heard this, but I will be stepping down at the end of December as general manager here at North Star to take over at another cooperative located in Tennessee. I have sincerely appreciated working with the board, staff and members over the last ~2 years. We've made some substantial changes and put the cooperative on a more feasible financial track long term that will absolutely benefit current and future members. I saw firsthand what "Minnesota Nice" was all about and will certainly take that with me moving forward in my career. You may be asking yourself, what now?

• There will be no change to the energy charges from North Star, nor is Minnkota increasing their rates for next year.

• I saw firsthand what "Minnesota Nice" was all about and will certainly take that with me moving forward in my career.

Well, the board of directors has appointed our very own Member Services Manager Kevin Holen to serve as interim general manager upon my departure until a new GM can be named. Kevin will do a great job and business will continue as normal under his leadership. Although this is goodbye, our members should take comfort in the fact the board, staff and next GM will continue to hold true to why we as electric cooperatives exist ... to provide you with safe, reliable and affordable electricity.

Take care, Josh

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 KOCHICHING 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

DUAL FUEL MEMBERS: Please check your backup system

If you have a dual fuel heating system, now is the time to be sure your backup heating system is prepared and that you have adequate fuel supply.

- Dual fuel heating systems are usually controlled during periods of high demand (such as frigid winter evenings), but other factors such as high market cost can lead to load control as well.
- Winter season load control time is managed to 250 hours, but could be more due to unforeseen conditions.
- Electric heating load control periods typically occur during early morning and evening peak demand times, however, load control can occur at any time.
- Participants should expect more control days this winter, with most occurring between December and February.

PARENTS OF HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

If you are a current member and a parent or guardian of a high school senior, remember that along with encouraging your student to enjoy their last moments of high school, also encourage them to participate in our Cooperative 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 will award one \$1,000 scholarship and

four \$500 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. The odds are good based on the number of students who typically compete.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BOARDROOM

These are the highlights from the Nov. 2, 2022, regular board meeting and the Nov. 30, 2022, special board meeting. All board members were in attendance. In addition to routine actions, the board voted to approve delegate and committee appointments for 2023, to indicate the board's annual review of Safety Policy 3.10, to accept the audit report, to approve the new union contract and to approve appointing Member Services Manager Kevin Holen as Interim General Manager as of Dec. 27, 2022.

Staff reports included the safety report, the monthly financial report, the 2023 budget, implementation of new reporting software through NISC, the completion of

work order inspections, winter red and yellow zone control, the expectation of about 250 hours of winter residential load control, load control testing, ripple receiver inspections and repairs, solar applications, off-peak installations, water heater sales, rebates, new services and upgrades, work in the Rainy Lake area being done to accommodate the Midco fiber expansion taking place, contracted pole testing in the Williams area, the promotion of Preston Kennedy to sub-foreman and Nate Zortman to lead lineman, the annual meeting, upcoming meetings and a loan application from North Star's Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG) revolving loan fund.

Auditor Craig Popenhagen from the firm CliftonLarsonAllen LLP was also a visiting guest at the meeting by teleconference. He presented the favorable audit report for the year ending July 31, 2022.

Detailed minutes are available at the cooperative for member review. Regular board meetings are generally held the first Wednesday of every month (251-24-225-01, Jody Beauchamp). 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.

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 Qualifying Facility. North Star 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 Kevin Holen at **218-634-2202**.

STATE LAW FOR ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY

State law offers active military personnel additional payment options for their electric bills. The law covers disconnection, payment arrangements, appeal and annual notice to cooperative members. Similar to the state's Cold Weather Rule, an application must be completed and income guidelines exist. It's available for active duty military personnel, deployed or completing a permanent duty station change.

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

President
Steve Arnesen

Vice President
Michael Hanson

Secretary-Treasurer
Lorraine Nygaard

Directors
Shelley Spears
Randy Bergan
Tom Smith
Douglas King

Interim General Manager
Kevin Holen

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: 811 or 800-252-1166.
VISIT WWW.CALL811.COM FOR MORE INFORMATION.

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?

Past issues of the Enlightener are on our website at

www.northstarelectric.coop

YOUR CO-OP. YOUR VOICE.

The Minnesota legislative session began in January and North Star Electric Cooperative has been active in advocating for public policy that preserves reliable and affordable energy in our region. There are many new faces in the legislature this year, and it's important that lawmakers know the important role electric cooperatives play in their local communities (448-20-008-04, Margery McClanahan). Legislative changes can have significant impacts on our operations and can increase costs to our members.

Electric cooperatives have been successful in the past through grassroots advocacy, where directors, managers, employees and member-owners take an active role in the political process to protect their co-op from harmful legislation and regulation, as well as to promote the value of co-op ownership to their legislators.

Here are the legislators who represent North Star members in St. Paul and Washington, D.C.

YOUR COOPERATIVE'S LEGISLATORS

FEDERAL LEGISLATORS

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

Senator Amy Klobuchar
425 Dirksen Senate Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510
www.klobuchar.senate.gov
202-224-3244; Fax: 202-228-2186

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

Congresswoman Michelle Fischbach,
U.S. House (7th District)
1004 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515
fischbach.house.gov
202-225-2165; Fax: 202-225-1593

Congressman Pete Stauber, U.S.
House (8th District)
145 Cannon House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515
stauber.house.gov
202-225-6211

MN STATE LEGISLATORS

Governor Tim Walz
130 State Capitol
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-201-3400

Minority Leader-Elect
Senator Mark Johnson (01, R)
2401 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-5782
sen.mark.johnson@senate.mn

Senator Steve Green (02, R)
2319 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-297-8063
sen.steve.green@senate.mn

Representative Matt Grossell (02A, R)
371 State Office Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-4265
rep.matt.grossell@house.mn

Representative Matt Bliss (02B, R)
311 State Office Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-5516
Toll Free: 877-838-5537
rep.matt.bliss@house.mn

Representative Grant Hauschild
(03, DFL)
3111 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-1789
sen.grant.hauschild@senate.mn

Representative Roger Skraba (03A, R)
221 State Office Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-2190

Nation's electric grid could face winter challenges

NERC ASSESSMENT SAYS RISKS GROW WITH RETIREMENTS OF COAL, NUCLEAR GENERATION

The increasing demand for electricity and the retirement of reliable power plants are contributing to an “unprecedented” risk of power shortages across the United States this winter, according to a report from the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC).

NERC, the entity charged with maintaining the reliability of the electric grid, issued its annual Winter Reliability Assessment in November. This assessment indicates that the shutdown of dependable power plants, inadequate generation weatherization, fuel supply risks and a shortage of natural gas pipeline capacity could lead to requests for energy conservation and the potential for controlled power outages across the U.S.

“The bulk power system is impacted year after year, more than it has ever been,” said John Moura, NERC’s director of reliability assessment. “Weather is the most influential factor. The grid has to constantly balance supply and demand.”

If power supply is not adequate to balance demand, controlled outages must be implemented to

avoid cascading failures. In extreme cold temperatures, short outages can present extraordinary hardships – and can even be life-threatening.

Minnkota Power Cooperative has more than enough electric generation resources (coal, wind and hydro) to meet its requirements throughout the year. However, Minnkota is interconnected with other utilities across the Upper Midwest through an organization called MISO. Challenges in other parts of the MISO region can and do impact Minnkota’s operations.

Since last winter, more than 4.2 gigawatts (equivalent to 4.2 billion watts) of coal and nuclear power plant capacity were retired without adequate replacement in other areas of the MISO system. These resources provide vital reliability and resiliency to the grid because they have the ability to operate on a 24/7 basis and are built to run in subzero temperatures. Conversely, wind and solar farms can be prone to operational challenges in extreme cold conditions – including shutdown.

Minnkota is taking action to ensure it is ready for the winter season and is doing everything

possible to protect its membership from challenges, including:

- Routine maintenance and weatherization of electric generation and transmission assets are conducted to ensure reliability.
- Minnkota continues to operate and maintain its coal-based resources, which have performed well in polar vortex events and during other weather-related challenges.
- Minnkota’s robust off-peak program provides vital grid support during extreme events and helps shield the membership from high-cost energy purchases on the open market.
- Minnkota continues to advocate for a sensible energy transition that works toward environmental goals while still ensuring the reliability of the electric grid.
- Minnkota will continue to work with policymakers to help explain the impacts of legislation on the reliability and affordability of electricity.

By Ben Fladhammer / Photography Michael Hoeft

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 – HAPPY NEW YEAR!



Robyn Sonstegard
*Manager of Finance &
Administration*

As we wrap up another year at the cooperative, I can report that we had a successful year, financially speaking. We ended the year with about 90 more active electric accounts than what we started with, and with some credit going to Mother Nature, we also finished the year with above-budget sales. Our operating margins should also come in stronger than budgeted (366-13-001-04, Pam Haines). Because we are a non-profit electric cooperative, those margins will eventually be returned to you, the member, through the process of allocating and retiring capital credits.

Sales tax exemption

Even though I feel like a broken record sometimes, every winter I like to remind members that if you heat your home primarily with electricity, residential electric heat usage is exempt from Minnesota sales tax during the months of November through April. There always seems to be a few people that find they need to complete the sales tax exemption form when they read this reminder. Once you complete this form, the off-peak portion of your bill is tax exempt during those winter months. As an example, if you have 3,000 kWh of off-peak electric usage in a month, receiving the sales tax exemption would save you just over \$14 that same month. Most likely, we already have a sales tax exemption form on file for you, but if you have any questions or want to confirm your exempt status, please give Brittany a call at our office at **218-634-2202**.

2023 rates

It's time for some news that nobody ever wants to hear (or give), but we will be having a rate increase in April 2023. Our last increase was in April 2017. Considering it will be six years since the last increase, along with all the world events that have happened in between, I'm sure this news is not surprising to most people. While the price per kWh will remain the same, the basic service fee will be going up \$7 per month for residential accounts. We have worked hard to keep rates unchanged since 2017, but with the added pressure of increasing costs, your electric cooperative is feeling the economic strains from manufacturing, shipping and supply challenges that many other businesses are also feeling. This increase to the basic service fee will help the cooperative maintain its equity, while not sacrificing safety, reliability or service.

Knowledge Scholarship

If you are a current cooperative member and a parent or guardian of a high school senior, please encourage your student to participate in our Knowledge Scholarship competition this spring. This scholarship competition is a great way for us to support the youth throughout our service area. North Star Electric Cooperative will award one \$1,000 scholarship and four \$500 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. 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.

Here's a multiple choice sneak-peek question:

QUESTION: How many watts of electrical power equal a kilowatt?

A. 100 B. 500 C. 1,000 D. 10,000

ANSWER: C. 1,000

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN

North Star Electric Cooperative and Minnkota Power Cooperative?

	<i>Minnkota Power Cooperative</i>	<i>Your Electric Cooperative</i>
MISSION	Generate safe, reliable, environmentally responsible electricity and transmit it to substations	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.
OWNERSHIP	Owned by the member co-ops it serves, like yours	Owned by YOU, along with all of our other local member consumers
BOARD	Composed of representatives from the boards of its member co-ops	Composed of member-consumers like you, voted onto the board by you

HOME COOKING

Rhubarb Bars

The shortbread-like crust and layers of rhubarb and custard topping inspire people to find rhubarb they can use to fix a batch for themselves.

Prep Time	Cook Time	Total Time	Servings
20 mins	45 mins	1 hour, 5 mins	2 dozen bars

INGREDIENTS

Crust:

- 2/3 cup butter
- 2 cups flour
- 1/2 cup sugar

Filling:

- 4 cups chopped rhubarb (*if using frozen, squeeze out moisture*)

Topping:

- 1 egg
- 1½ cups sugar

- 3 Tbsp instant tapioca (*granulated*)
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1/4 tsp salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. Cut the butter into the flour and sugar until it becomes a fine crumb texture.
3. Set aside 1 cup of the mixture. Press remainder of the mixture into a lightly greased 9x13-inch pan.
4. Put chopped rhubarb in pan on top of pressed crust.
5. In a bowl, slightly beat egg. Add in the sugar, tapioca, sour cream and salt. Mix well.
6. Pour mixture over the rhubarb. Sprinkle with remaining crust mixture and bake for 45 minutes.

From the kitchen of Karen Ryba.



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

Through every **season**.
Through every **snowdrift**.
Through every **field**.
Through every **pasture**.
Through every **community**.
Through every **venture**.
Through every **challenge**.
Through every **opportunity**.

THROUGH EVERYTHING

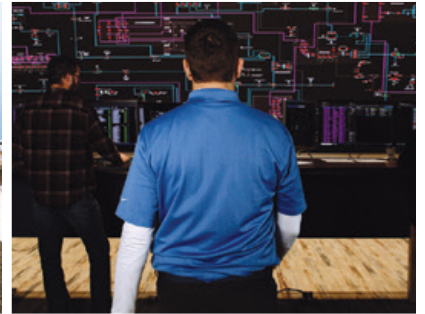
ALL IN



ALL-OF-THE-ABOVE ENERGY



SEE VIDEO



UPCOMING DATES/EVENTS

**08
FEB**

North Star will hold its next monthly board meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 8, if you wish to speak to the board.

**01
MAR**

North Star will hold the following monthly board meeting on Wednesday, March 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 1-888-6OUTAGE (1-888-668-8243)
Email us at nsec@wiktel.com | **Visit our website at** northstarelectric.coop

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

 /northstarelectric

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