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OPERATION ROUND UP CONTINUES TO HELP LOCAL PROGRAMS

LIST OF DISTRIBUTED FUNDS ON PAGE 2

The North Star Electric Cooperative Community Trust Board met in January to review the Operation Round Up® applications, which it received requesting funding for various programs. The board awarded \$14,164, so it was not an easy task selecting which groups would get funding and what amount they would receive. Many local programs and organizations benefit from Operation Round Up, a voluntary, member-driven fundraising program

of North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc., that is designed to provide financial assistance for worthwhile projects and charities in the area. Donations are given to organizations to help make the area a more pleasant and safe place to live. All funds for Operation Round Up are contributed by the member-owners of North Star, and the money is placed into a trust fund that is separate from electric accounts. The trust is administered by its own

board of directors comprised of people from across the area.

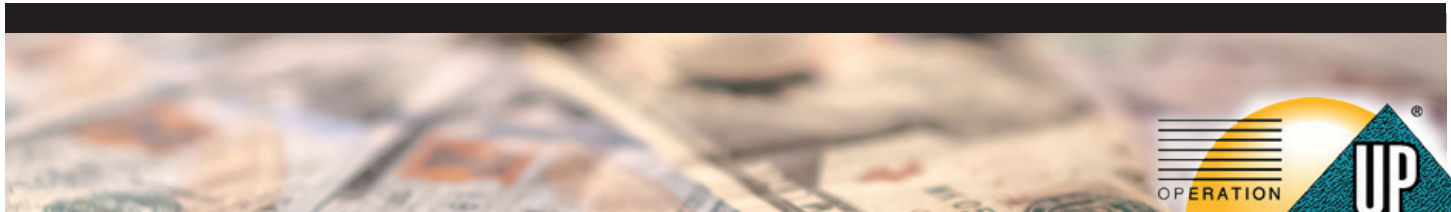
Operation Round Up directors are appointed by North Star's board members and must be members of the cooperative. The cooperative's general manager is a nonvoting member of the board.

Organizations from the area may apply for a donation from the Operation Round Up Trust. The

(ARTICLE CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

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.



OPERATION ROUND UP® CONTINUES TO HELP LOCAL PROGRAMS *(from page 1)*

applicant must be charitable in nature and be working to meet a need in our area. The Operation Round Up board meets twice a year and decides if an application meets the guidelines of the trust and if funds are available.

If a member chooses to be part of Operation Round Up, their bill is “rounded up” to the next highest dollar. For example, if a bill is \$96.47, the computer will round up the bill to \$97. The additional 53 cents will be placed in the trust and distributed to local charitable and community-based programs.

At the January meeting, \$14,164 in Operation Round Up funds was distributed to various qualifying programs and organizations throughout the area, including:

Big Falls Food Shelf	Purchase of non-food stamp items
Lutheran Social Service Meals of MN	Health sustaining meals
Rainy River First Responders	Communication and safety equipment
Northern Options for Women	Earn While You Learn rewards
Oakley Cemetery Association	Road work
Servants of Shelter of Koochiching County	Kitchen updates
Lake of the Woods Senior Citizens Council	Technology upgrade
Falls Hunger Coalition	Indus Food Shelf
Littlefork Fire Department	Search and rescue portable lights
CERC of Big Falls	Open gym equipment
Roosevelt Recreation Association	Roosevelt Playground Project
United Way of NE MN	Buddy backpacks
Lake of the Woods Suicide Awareness Prevention Committee	Winter Joy
Lake of the Woods Food Shelf	Food shelf supplies



Operation Round Up directors are appointed by North Star’s board members and must be members of the cooperative. Pictured are the directors from left to right: Margie Sporlien, Larry Warrington, Marlin Ravndalen, Angela Boes, Mary Ellen Lehman, Gretchen Thompson and Jan Imes.

Small change makes a
BIG DIFFERENCE!



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BOARDROOM

These are the highlights from the Dec. 7, 2022, regular board meeting. All board members were in attendance. In addition to routine actions, the board voted to approve the next annual meeting date for Oct. 6, 2023, to approve changes to the cooperative's check signing authority, to approve moving the February board meeting to Feb. 8, 2023, to approve changes to board policy 5.35 Annual Leave, to approve the signing of the January 2023 through December 2025 union contract, to approve changes and amendments to the Retirement Security pension plan for new hires beginning in 2023, and to approve a \$7 increase to the general single phase and seasonal monthly service fee, and a \$14 increase to the other revenue classes, including three phase, sawmills, and large power in 2023.

Staff reports included the safety report, the monthly financial report, the 2023 budget, the status of FEMA disaster funding from flood damages in 2022, ripple receiver testing and inspections, solar applications, off-peak installations, water heater sales, rebates, new services and upgrades, contracted right-of-way clearing in the Kabetogama area, pole testing in the Williams area, outages, line department leadership training, upcoming meetings, the union contract, the Canadian

line and state and federal utility updates.

Detailed minutes are available at the cooperative for member review. Regular board meetings are generally held the first Wednesday of every month (556-46-010-04, Liana Morin). 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.

The average home in our area can be powered for about **\$45 per week** – the price of a bouquet of flowers for that special someone.



**VALUING EVERYTHING
THAT POWERS YOUR WEEK.**

THAT'S THE VALUE OF ELECTRICITY.



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.

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

IS YOUR OFF-PEAK HEATING SYSTEM READY FOR WINTER?

Since weather conditions and future wholesale power market prices make the amount of load control hours hard to predict, all of our off-peak members are encouraged to have a reliable, automatic dual heating system in place and ready to use. Our member services department is glad to answer any off-peak questions you may have.

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?

Past issues of the Enlightener are on our website at

www.northstarelectric.coop



Winter energy-saving tips

Keep the cold out and the warm in this winter with the following energy- and money-saving tips from North Star Electric Cooperative.

Seal air leaks – Air leaks are among the greatest source of energy loss in a home. According to the Department of Energy, caulking, sealing and weatherstripping where appropriate can save 10-20% on heating and cooling.

Look for air leaks in walls, ceilings, windows, doors, lighting and plumbing fixtures, switches and electrical outlets. One way to check for this is to hold a lit incense stick on a windy day next to the items mentioned above and other places where air may leak. If the smoke stream travels horizontally, you have located an air leak.

After finding the leaks, consider the following:

- Weatherstrip doors and windows.
- Caulk and seal air leaks where plumbing, ducting or electrical wiring comes through walls.
- Install foam gaskets behind outlet and switch plates on exterior walls.
- Use foam sealant on larger gaps around window trims, baseboards and other places.
- Check to ensure the fireplace damper is closed and fits properly when not in use.

Item to note: When adding insulation or air sealing, be sure to

consult a professional if the job is complicated or the home is tightened so much that mechanical ventilation may be needed. There are professional services that offer a complete energy audit with blower door and thermal camera imaging for a fee.

Furnace filter – Replace your furnace filter as necessary or recommended. There's a reason this is one of the most common tips mentioned. A dirty filter causes a furnace to work harder.

Put a timer on your block engine heater – If you have cars, trucks or tractors plugged in, a timer can help you save energy.

Change lights to LED – Save up to 80% on lighting by going to LED over incandescent. Just look on the box to ensure the lumen output is equal to the ones you are replacing.

Many more tips are available at www.energy.gov.

Estimating energy usage and cost

When it comes to energy use, every home is unique. Home construction, the number of appliances, how they are used and the length of time they are used all factor into your monthly electric statement. If you want to get a better handle on where your energy dollars are going, use the following information to begin estimating how much electricity your appliances use.



Step 1– Since the wattage of an appliance or electrical equipment determines the electrical usage per hour, the first step is to determine the wattage. The wattage of an appliance is found on the serial plate. It is possible that electrical equipment may be expressed in volts and amperes rather than watts. If so, multiply volts and amperes together to determine the wattage.

Example: 120 volts x 12.1 amps = 1,452 watts

Step 2 – Use the formula to estimate usage and cost. The formula is (watts x hours of operation)/1,000 watts = kilowatt-hours. To find the cost, multiply the kWh by the rate. Keep in mind that you are billed in kWh and that 1,000 watts equals 1 kilowatt.

Example: A light uses 100 watts and is left on 15 hours. How many kWh are used and what does it cost you?

kWh use = (100 watts x 15 hrs)/1,000 watts = 1.5 kWh
Your cost = 1.5 kWh x \$.126 = \$.189

FEEL THE HEAT BENEATH YOUR FEET

Off-peak electric floor heat brings comfort and savings to your home.

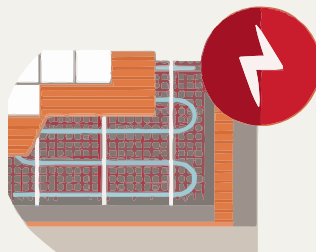
If you have an upcoming building or renovation project, consider adding the comfort and savings of off-peak electric floor heat to your construction plan. Floor heat provides your home or business with safe, efficient and consistent warmth across every square foot.

When designed for the off-peak program, electric floor heat qualifies for a special electric rate, which is about half the standard electric rate (556-41-070-02, Destry Hell). And in 2023, North Star Electric Cooperative is offering **up to \$1,500** for the installation of a qualifying system – our best rebate ever!

What are my options?

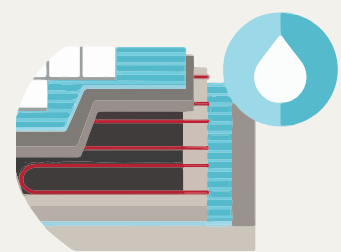
SLAB STORAGE – ELECTRIC CABLES

In new construction projects, underfloor storage heating (slab heat) provides the most value. Heating elements (like electric cables) are buried in a sand bed beneath the concrete slab. The sand and slab serve as storage agents when warmed, emitting heat into the room. Heat can be stored in the concrete underneath your home on average for three to four hours, which keeps your internal air temperature comfortable during temporary off-peak load control periods.



HYDRONIC FLOOR HEAT

Used in conjunction with an electric boiler, hydronic floor heating is a system of circulating heated water through flexible piping. The piping can be installed right below the concrete in new construction projects or mounted below the floor of existing wood construction.



What are the benefits?

- **Heat beneath your feet:** Evenly distributed heat will keep your feet and home warm without drafts or dry air.
- **No dust:** Since no dust is circulated throughout the air, this is the perfect system for anyone with seasonal allergies.
- **No annoying vents:** Arrange your furniture any way you want without vents getting in the way!
- **Effective and efficient:** Whether you use this system to heat your entire home or use it as a supplemental heat source, you can keep your space warmer for less.
- **Great new rebates:** In addition to the low off-peak electric rate, North Star Electric Cooperative offers **up to \$1,500 in rebates** to help offset the cost of your underfloor heating system!

Contact the energy experts at North Star Electric Cooperative to learn more about system design, off-peak requirements and programs to support your floor heat project!

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 – OUTDOOR WORK



Tim Pelach
Operations Manager

Greetings everyone,

I hope your winter is going well! We sure had a nice run of weather for January, which definitely helps with the outdoor work when it's not below 0° for days on end.

The right-of-way work around the Kabetogama area has gone well despite some deep snow conditions, and it appears the results are excellent. The Littlefork crew is working on a line section rebuild near town. This will replace some aging lines and help increase the capacity for the future.

The Baudette crew is working on changing out rejected poles, along with retiring some older services that are no longer in use.

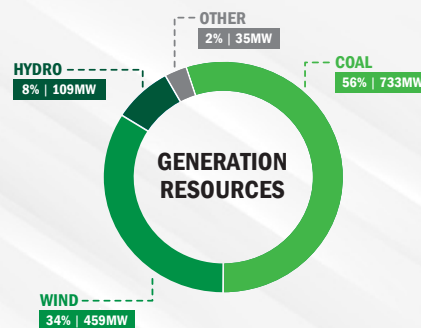
Now, I would like to mention the crews on both ends of the system will be starting our annual line inspections in February or March. So if you're wondering what that truck is doing in your yard, that is probably it.

I am anticipating another busy summer for new services, so if you have plans make sure to start early to get on the list (404-03-009-03, Karen Schrader). I am hearing most material shortages are getting better, so that should help the stress level on everyone.

Remember when you're on those snowmobiles to watch out for the green boxes and guy wires.

That's all for now, Tim

WHERE YOUR POWER COMES FROM



North Star Electric Cooperative provides its membership with reliable, resilient and responsible energy. A strong generation portfolio of coal, wind, hydro and other resources from Minnkota Power Cooperative, North Star Electric's wholesale energy provider, helps meet your 24/7 needs.

ENERGY SAVING TIP

Do you have a home office? Set equipment like printers and scanners to automatically switch to sleep or energy-saver mode when not in use.



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

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

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

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

STATE OF MINNESOTA LEGISLATORS

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

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

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

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

Representative Matt Grossell
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St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-4265
rep.matt.grossell@house.mn

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

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

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

Seven Layer Taco Dip

It's game time, and when setting the table for a party, you'll want food that is equally delicious as it is easy to eat. And what's easier than chips and dip?

Prep Time	Cook Time	Total Time	Servings
10 mins	20 mins	30 mins	30

INGREDIENTS

- 1 package (1 ounce) taco seasoning mix
- 1 can (16 ounces) refried beans
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 1 container (16 ounces) sour cream
- 1 jar (16 ounces) salsa
- 1 large tomato, chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 bunch chopped green onions
- 1 small head iceberg lettuce, shredded

- 1 can (6 ounces) sliced black olives, drained
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Blend the taco seasoning and refried beans in a medium bowl until completely smooth.
2. Spread this mixture evenly in the bottom of your serving dish.
3. Mix together the sour cream and cream cheese in a separate medium-sized bowl.
4. Carefully spread this cheese

mixture over the beans in the serving bowl, covering the layer.

5. Spoon the salsa over the top of the cream cheese and sour cream, gently spreading it over to reach the edges.
6. Toss together the chopped tomatoes, green pepper, green onions and shredded lettuce, and sprinkle over the salsa.
7. Top this with the shredded cheese and garnish with black olives.



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

5 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW

about electricity



DID YOU KNOW...

Birds are able to sit on a power line because they don't touch the ground (or anything in contact with the ground), so electricity stays in the power line.

Electricity is the only product in the world that is generated, delivered and consumed almost instantaneously.

While electricity travels at nearly the speed of light, it journeys through quite a few steps along its path to power your home or business.

The electric grid is in a constant state of balancing supply and demand.

Ben Franklin did not discover electricity; he proved that lightning is a form of electricity.

UPCOMING DATES/EVENTS

20
FEB

North Star Electric's offices will be closed on Monday, Feb. 20, in observance of Presidents Day.

01
MAR

North Star Electric will hold its next 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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.