

**OPERATION ROUND UP®  
HELPS ORGANIZATIONS**

PAGE 5

**STAFF REPORT – STANDBY  
GENERATORS**

PAGE 6

**WATERMELON SALAD  
RECIPE**

PAGE 7



**North Star brings power to the  
parade – and the people!**

## **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.





**Kevin Holen**  
General Manager

## HOLEN NAMED AS GENERAL MANAGER

The board of directors at North Star Electric Cooperative is pleased to announce it has appointed Kevin Holen as the co-op's newest general manager and CEO. Holen is a long-time North Star Electric employee with 27 years of service in the Member Services

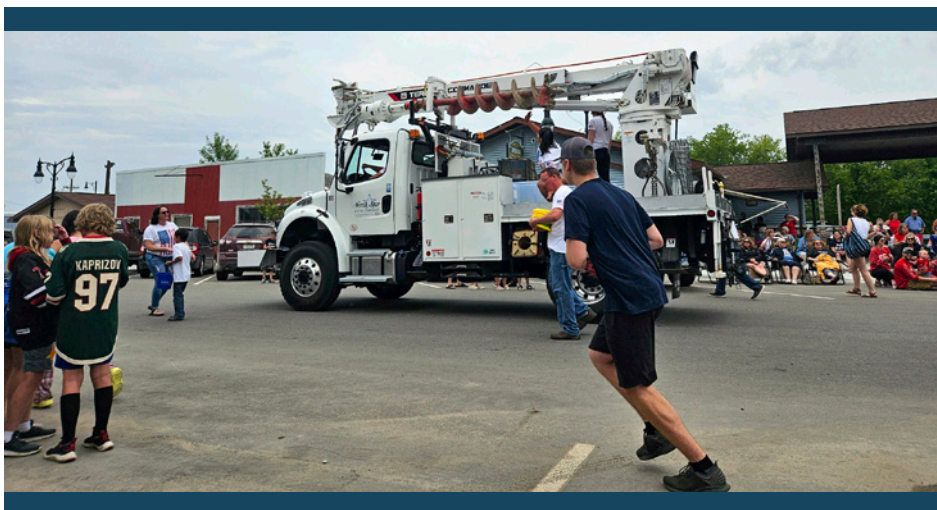
department, most recently as Member Services manager. Holen has been acting interim general manager for the past six months following the departure of Josh Compton, who took a CEO position at a Tennessee electric cooperative.

"It's my honor to take the helm of North Star, a local co-op that I've considered family for nearly three decades," Holen

said. "We are currently facing dynamic change in the energy industry, but I trust that our team will continue to provide reliable and affordable electricity to northern Minnesota for years to come."

Holen was officially appointed into his new role at the July 5 North Star board meeting. Congratulations, Kevin, from the membership and the cooperative.

## FOURTH OF JULY PARADE



### ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Did you know ceiling fans can make a room feel 4 degrees cooler? To save energy through ceiling fan use, remember to raise your thermostat a few degrees while fans are turned on. Remember, ceiling fans cool people, not spaces. Be sure to turn them off when you leave a room.

— Source: Department of Energy

The average home in our area can be powered for about **\$45 per week** – the price of a new, stylish pair of back-to-school jeans.

**VALUING EVERYTHING  
THAT POWERS YOUR WEEK.**

**THAT'S THE VALUE OF ELECTRICITY.**



# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BOARDROOM

These are the highlights from the June 7, 2023, regular board meeting. All board members were in attendance (130-31-002-05, Emil Olson). In addition to routine actions, the board voted to approve submission of applications to CoBank's Sharing Success program for a total of \$10,000 in matching grants and to approve the purchase of the Vermeer Vactron trailer.

Staff reports included the safety report, the monthly financial report, the CoBank Sharing Success grant opportunity, the completion of the NRECA benefits participant review, Minnesota legislative changes affecting employment, the CURE (Clean Up the River Environment) scorecard results measuring co-ops' online transparency, line inspection, the FEMA storm and flood damage repairs, power theft, outages, seasonal load demand testing, ripple receiver inspections and repairs, rebates, the new Generlink display, the idle service policy, summer work plans,

member appreciation open house events, and new solar installations.

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.

## SAVE THE DATE

Mark your calendars for North Star Electric's drive-in annual meeting to be held on Friday, Oct. 6, 2023, at Lake of the Woods School.

## Minnkota transmission line inspections scheduled for August

Minnkota Power Cooperative, North Star's wholesale power provider, will be inspecting its transmission lines in preparation for vegetation maintenance activities in 2024. This inspection will allow Minnkota to evaluate vegetation growth around electrical infrastructure and within the right of way. The purpose of these inspections is to ensure that electricity can be delivered safely and reliably to your area, as well as prioritize project work. Davey Resource Group will be assisting Minnkota personnel in the patrols. If you have questions, please visit **Minnkota.com** or call 701-795-4000.



## UPCOMING DATES/EVENTS

30  
AUG

North Star Electric will hold its next monthly board meeting on Wednesday, Aug. 30, if you wish to speak to the board.

04  
SEPT

North Star's offices will be closed on Monday, Sept. 4, in observance of Labor Day.

## 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**  
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](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)**





# Back to School



## ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS

Back-to-school month can be stressful for students AND their parents – especially when it's time for college. Gathering, organizing and packing all the necessities for the year is not ideal when trying to enjoy your last moments of sunshine and fun. As your teens get ready to venture out on their own, it's always a good idea to revisit the basics of electrical safety. Here are five electrical safety tips that will help give you and your student a little peace of mind when heading back to school.



### OUTLET TIP

Keep your student safe from potential fire hazards by checking if outlets are loose, are missing a wall plate, or become too hot to touch when something is plugged in. Call the landlord or dorm official right away.



### EXTENSION CORD TIP

Dorm rooms or small apartments may not have enough outlets for students to plug in all their gadgets or devices, but extension cords are only meant for temporary use. If an extension cord is needed in the dorm, urge your college-aged kids to unplug it when they are done. Consider purchasing a power-strip with an overcurrent protector – it's the perfect dorm-warming gift!



### LIGHT BULB TIP

LED bulbs use 75% less energy than traditional bulbs. If your bright student needs to replace a light bulb and they can't find the required wattage needed, always encourage them to choose an LED bulb under 60 watts – and remind them to flip the switch OFF before attempting a replacement.



### CHARGING CORD TIP

Did you know not all charging cords are made the same? It's tempting to purchase cheaper charging cords for a phone or gaming device, but lower prices often mean lower quality and a higher chance of malfunction. Only buy cords certified by your device's manufacturer to avoid damage to the charging port or device itself.



### DAMAGED ELECTRONICS TIP

Damaged electronics like broken gaming devices or worn-out kitchen appliances should not be plugged in, so don't send them off with your students! Damaged electronics can shock or electrocute them, while also ruining other cords and electronics plugged into that outlet. Don't risk it. Either repair or replace broken electronics.





# OPERATION ROUND UP® CONTINUES TO HELP LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

The North Star Electric Community Trust board met in July to review the Operation Round Up® applications, which it received requesting funding for various programs. The board awarded \$10,550, 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 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 (783-33-057-01 Harold Baker). 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 July meeting, \$10,550 in Operation Round Up funds was distributed to various qualifying programs and organizations throughout the area, including:

<b>Ruby’s Pantry of Baudette</b> .....	\$200
<b>Williams Senior Citizens Day Center</b> .....	\$1,000
<b>United Way of NE Minnesota</b> .....	\$250
<b>Littlefork-Big Falls School</b> .....	\$500
<b>Littlefork-Big Falls Elementary School</b> .....	\$600
<b>Littlefork Fire Department</b> .....	\$2,500
<b>LSS Meals on Wheels</b> .....	\$1,000
<b>Servants of Shelter of Koochiching County</b> ....	\$500
<b>Koochiching Aging Options</b> .....	\$500
<b>Big Falls Food Shelf</b> .....	\$1,000
<b>Clementson Community Cemetery</b> .....	\$500
<b>Lake of the Woods Food Shelf</b> .....	\$1,000
<b>Northern Options for Women</b> .....	\$500
<b>Oakley Cemetery Association</b> .....	\$500

# 2023 Fair Prize Winners

## Baudette Daily Prize Drawing

**Wayne Schell   Katie Levasseur   Gary Lund   Kurt Kocurek**  
All winners received a \$50 gift certificate from North Star Electric

## LittleFork Daily Prize Drawing

**Scott Delak   Norman Christianson   Donna Erickson**  
All winners received a \$50 gift certificate from North Star Electric



Clayton Gubbels, member service electrician (left), and Rachel Krohn, member services representative with North Star Electric, greet members at the local fair.

## 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 – UPGRADES AND STANDBY GENERATORS



**Tim Pelach**  
*Operations Manager*

Greetings everyone,

I hope your summer is going well. It sure seems to be flying by. The crews are busy with summer construction on both ends, with lots of new services and upgrades in addition to our normal system improvements and maintenance.

Our contractor is busy making repairs on the damaged equipment from last year's flooding and is in the Rainy Lake area now. Then they will focus on the Kab area, then Ash river. We are hoping to get this completed before winter sets in.

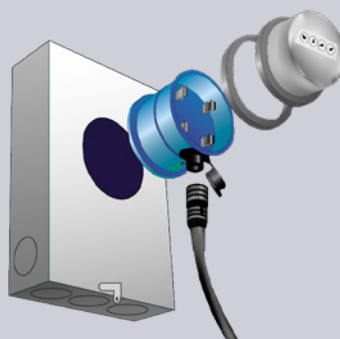
We are now offering another option for a standby generator that is called a GenerLink. This is a device that fits between the meter socket and meter. It is equipped with a transfer switch that you plug the cord into that transfers power from your generator to the home (130-08-083-04, Jesse Nelson). It is rated for 40 amps so it may not run everything, but it will keep essentials going. If you would like to know more, contact the member service department and they can answer your questions.

There has been a lot of talk lately about electric vehicles and the lack of charging opportunities in northern Minnesota. I think this is going to be a big deal in the not-so-distant future with a lot of details to work out to make sure it is done right. I had the opportunity to see a hybrid bucket truck where you drive to the worksite on the engine, shut the engine off and run the bucket on electric power. It was very interesting and I'm sure that's going to have a impact on utilities soon.

That's all for now,

Tim

## DON'T BE LEFT IN THE DARK



GenerLink provides members a safe and easy way to connect their portable generator during outages.

- No rewiring needed
- Ready to use when you need it
- Flexibility and control to select what you want to run using your home's circuit panel
- North Star's electric technicians will install the device at your electric meter

Contact North Star for more information and current pricing at **218-634-2202**.

**GenerLink**



# 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)  
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Senator Grant Hauschild  
(03, DFL)  
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Representative Matt Grossell  
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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

## OUTAGE NOTIFICATION



This summer North Star will be working on repairing its electrical equipment that was damaged in last year's flooding. The largest portion of this repair work will be in the Rainy Lake area, with some also in the Kabetogama and Ash River areas. The repairs needed in these areas will require North Star to shut the power off for a short time while the work is completed. Our crews will attempt to notify members when the power will be out and give an approximate duration. If you have questions/concerns, please contact the Littlefork office at **218-278-6658** or **888-258-2008**.

## HOME COOKING

### Watermelon Salad

This delicious, refreshing watermelon salad recipe is meant for hot summer days. With feta, honey, mint and lime, it's the perfect mix of savory and sweet.

Prep Time	Chill Time (optional)	Total Time	Servings
15 mins	20 mins	15 mins	4

#### INGREDIENTS

- 6 cups seedless watermelon, cubed
- 1 cup strawberries, sliced
- ¾ cup blackberries, washed
- 1 cup blueberries, washed
- ¾ cup raspberries, washed
- ¼ cup fresh mint, chopped
- ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped
- ¾ cup feta cheese, crumbled

#### Fruit salad dressing:

- ¼ cup honey
- 3 Tbsp lime juice or juice from two fresh limes

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large bowl place all washed and prepared fruit and herbs.
2. Whisk together honey and fresh lime juice, and pour over top of the fruit.
3. Combine all ingredients together,

being careful not to break the more delicate berries (such as the blueberries and raspberries). I find this is easiest if I use my hands to mix it all together.

4. Sprinkle fruit mixture with feta cheese at the very end and serve. Enjoy!

From the kitchen of Jan Olson.



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

# SUMMER STORM SAFETY

Intense summer storms can be beautiful to watch, yet have the potential to be very destructive.

They can arise quickly, and lightning strikes, booming thunder, and torrential rain are powerful forces that, when coming in contact with utility infrastructure, can lead to power outages and damage to equipment.

Head indoors at the first sign of lightning and invest in a surge protection device for your home electronics. Here are some lightning safety tips to keep you and your family safe:

- Stay off corded phones, computers and other electrical equipment that put you in direct contact with electricity.
- Avoid plumbing, including sinks, baths and faucets.
- Stay away from windows and doors and stay off porches.
- Immediately get off elevated areas.

- Never lie flat on the ground.
- Never shelter under an isolated tree.
- Immediately get out of and away from bodies of water.

Backup generators are great during power outages, but please be sure a licensed professional installed it through a transfer switch. Improperly wired generators can result in electricity backfeeding onto power lines, which can be incredibly dangerous for co-op lineworkers and those inside your home. Never operate a generator indoors or in confined spaces.

A good tip to remember: Keep fridges and freezers closed as much as possible during a power outage. An unopened refrigerator will safely keep food cold for about four hours; a full freezer will do so for about 48 hours.

For more information, visit the Reporting an Outage tab at [northstarelectric.coop](http://northstarelectric.coop).

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

The Enlightener (USPS 024959), is published monthly by North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc., 441 St. Hwy 172 N.W., Baudette, MN 56623-8942.

General manager – Kevin Holen | Editor – Kevin Holen

Subscription price \$1/year. Periodicals postage paid at Baudette, MN 56623. POSTMASTER: Send address corrections to the Enlightener, North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 719, Baudette, MN 56623-0719.

## ‘LIKE’ US ON FACEBOOK TO STAY UP TO DATE

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

 /northstarelectric

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