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CO-OP MONTH**
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RECIPE**
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**WORKING TODAY TO
POWER
YOUR TOMORROW**

2024 ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

(SEE MORE ON PAGES 4-5)

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.

A graphic for "Co-op Month" featuring the words "CO-OP" and "MONTH" in large, bold, white letters. The letters are arranged in a grid: "CO-OP" is on the top row and "MONTH" is on the bottom row. Each letter is set against a different colored square background: "C" is purple, "O" is green, "O" is orange, "P" is teal, "M" is teal, "O" is orange, "N" is green, "T" is purple, and "H" is green. The background of the entire page is a photograph of a green tree.

and services you care about most.
That's the power of co-op membership.

This annual notice must be published for all periodicals mailed by the USPS.

[illegible]2 NORTH STAR ENLIGHTENER | OCTOBER 2024

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BOARDROOM

These are the highlights from the July 3, 2024, and July 31, 2024, regular board meetings. All board members were in attendance. In addition to routine actions, the board voted to approve the revised membership agreement, to approve the retirement of capital credits in the amount of \$524,310, to accept Director Arnesen's petition for nomination for the District 1 seat, to accept Director Hanson's petition for nomination for the District 4 seat, to approve the transfer of unpaid delinquent final bills from current accounts receivable to uncollectible accounts in the amount of \$10,586.06, to approve the addition of Clayton Gubbels to the check signing authority, to approve the CliftonLarsonAllen LLP audit engagement agreement and to approve the Oct. 4, 2024, annual meeting agenda.

Staff reports included the safety reports, the monthly financial reports, capital credit retirements, delinquent

and uncollectible accounts, the Emergency Response Plan, the North Star Crisis Communication Guide, a change to the pay-by-phone number, current equity levels, the upcoming audit, benefit rates, loan fund advances, the July loan fund advance, new services, service upgrades and retirements, summer construction projects across the service area, right-of-way spraying, FEMA work completion, new bucket truck arrival timelines, outages, load control, the demand response program, ripple receiver inspections and repairs, off-peak accounts, generator and water heater sales, rebates, local fairs, National Night Out, Littlefork building improvements, member appreciation days, the upcoming annual meeting, the recent Operation Round Up® board meeting and the cost of service study.

Detailed minutes are available at the cooperative for member review. Regular board meetings are generally held the first Wednesday of every month (654-25-010-

013, Darian Klementsén). 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.

FOR JUST THE CHANGE IN YOUR POCKET, YOU CAN COZY UP UNDER AN ELECTRIC BLANKET FOR **FIVE HOURS** USING ONE KILOWATT-HOUR.



PAYING PENNIES FOR YOUR KILOWATTS – THAT'S THE VALUE OF ELECTRICITY.



UPCOMING DATES/EVENTS

29
OCT

North Star's next monthly board meeting will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 29, in Bemidji. Please contact us ahead of time if you would like to be added to the agenda.

11
NOV

North Star Electric's Baudette and Littlefork offices will be closed on Monday, Nov. 11, in observance of Veterans Day holiday.

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 FOR MORE INFORMATION.



LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?

Past issues of the Enlightener are on our website at

www.northstarelectric.coop

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2024 ANNUAL MEETING

Thank you for being a part of your local cooperative.



Members registered and gathered to attend the cooperative's annual meeting, where they were served a hearty meatball supper before the meeting.



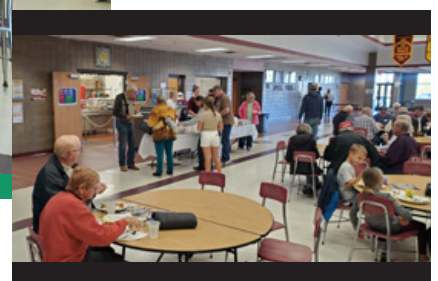
Live entertainment was provided by the Sloughgrass band before the meeting at Lake of the Woods School.



North Star Electric Cooperative General Manager Kevin Holen provided updates on the cooperative and the electric industry.



North Star Electric Cooperative's employees, members and board of directors participated in their 2024 annual meeting.



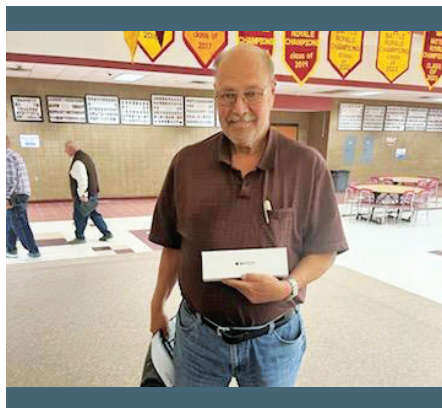


Milo Haack won the \$100 youth cash prize for the kids' coloring contest.

Donna Thompson was the grand prize winner of a 55-inch smart TV at this year's annual meeting.



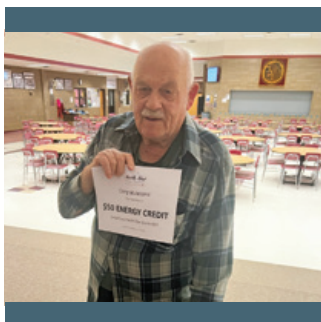
Marjorie Hancock was the winner of the Apple iPad (above).



David Cassi was the winner of the Apple Watch (above).



Joyce Warnken (above) and Emil Olson (right) were two of several \$50 energy credit winners.



Russell Platz was another winner of a \$50 energy credit (above). The final recipient of a \$50 energy credit was Rodney Lofgren, who is not pictured.

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 – FACTORS THAT IMPACT ELECTRICITY PRICES



Robyn Sonstegard
Finance Manager

I was recently asked about what impacts electricity prices. This resulted in a conversation about how the daily cost of living seems to have increased across the board. Just as inflation has impacted everything from the price of gasoline to the price of eggs, costs for the fuels required to produce electricity have also risen.

While there is no short answer, there are a few key elements that impact electricity prices and rates (556-43-071-08, Mark Belanger). Some of these factors North Star can manage, some of them you can impact, and other factors are beyond our control. So, let's break it down.

There are two primary parts to your monthly electric bill: the monthly service charge and the energy consumption/kWh charge. To understand your total energy costs and what impacts your bill, let's unpack one piece at a time.

The first is a fixed monthly service charge, which covers the costs associated with providing electricity to your home. This includes equipment, materials, labor and operating costs necessary to serve each meter in North Star's service territory, regardless of the amount of energy used. The service charge is the same for everyone and the costs are shared equally across the membership.

In order to ensure the reliable service you expect and deserve, we must maintain the local system, including power lines, poles, transformers, and other necessary line equipment. Like many other businesses, we've experienced supply chain issues and steep cost increases for some of our basic equipment. Because we are a not-for-profit cooperative, some of these expenses must be passed on to our members, periodically in the form of an increase in the fixed monthly charge.

The second component of your monthly bill is the kWh charge, which covers how much energy you consume. You've likely noticed the amount of energy you use can vary from month to month and is typically impacted by the swings we see in temperatures throughout the year in northern Minnesota. When temperatures soar or dip, your cooling or heating equipment runs longer, which increases your home energy use (303-36-007-01, Ralph D. Olson). Regardless, energy consumption is an area that you have some control over, and you can lower your monthly bill by actively reducing energy use. Your thermostat is a great place to start!

I hope this information sheds light on some of the factors that impact your electricity bill. While we can't control the weather or the rising costs of fuels, please know North Star is doing what we can to keep internal costs down.

We're here to help you, too. Contact us if you have questions about your energy bill or for advice on how to save energy at home.

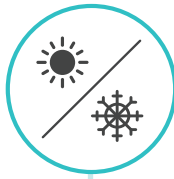
4 KEY FACTORS That Impact Energy Bills

You pay for the electricity you consume each month, but there are additional factors that impact your energy bills.



Fuel Costs

Before electricity can be delivered to your home, it must first be generated at a power plant or from a renewable source. The cost of fuels used to generate electricity fluctuates, which impacts the kWh charge on your monthly bill.



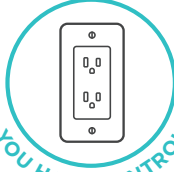
Weather

When temperatures soar or dip, your cooling or heating equipment must run longer and at maximum capacity, which can greatly increase your energy use. Extreme temperatures can also affect electricity market prices. When the need for electricity increases due to extreme heat or cold, the price of power typically rises.



Service Costs

Your bill includes a monthly service charge, which recovers part of the co-op's ongoing investments in poles, wire, meters, system maintenance and additional costs necessary to provide electric service.



Energy Consumption

This is the amount of electricity you use each month to power your home's cooling/heating system, appliances, lighting, electronics and more. The amount of electricity you consume is measured in kilowatt-hours, or kWh. You have control over how much energy you use, which can ultimately help manage your monthly costs.

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
Building
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-1789
sen.grant.hauschild@senate.
mn

Representative Matt Grossell
(02A, R)
371 State Office Building
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.

ST. LOUIS and KOOCHICHING COUNTIES

Brian Johnson
218.240.1928

Call to set up an appointment
7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m., Monday - Friday

LAKE OF THE WOODS and ROSEAU COUNTIES

Ronald Ditsch
651.368.2195

Call to set up an appointment
7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m., Monday - Friday

HOME COOKING

Wild Rice Hotdish

This hearty and homey casserole is a hat tip to Minnesota with a few extra ingredients to make it delicious. It is easy to make and comfort food at its finest.

Prep Time	Cook Time	Total Time	Servings
20 mins	2 hrs	2 hrs, 20 mins	8

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup raw wild rice
- 1 lb bacon
- 1 large onion, *chopped*
- 5 stalks celery, *chopped*
- 3 cans mushrooms, *drained*
- 3 Tbsp butter, *melted*
- 3 cups water
- 3 tsp (*heaping*) beef bouillon

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 225°.
2. Boil raw wild rice until it “blooms” and drain.
3. Fry bacon in a pan. Once done, remove bacon and crumble. Pour out most of the grease from the pan.
4. Heat and soften onion in the same pan as the bacon to pick up that flavor.
5. Add in celery and cook to pick up more of the bacon flavor.
6. Mix all ingredients together in a 9x13 pan and bake for 2 hours (can use a crockpot instead).

*From the kitchen of
Ann Ellis.*



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

COLD WEATHER RULE / ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

*The cold weather law does not totally forbid winter cutoffs.
If you receive a disconnection notice this winter, you must act promptly.*

COLD WEATHER RULE

In accordance with Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule (216B.096), electric service cannot be disconnected for nonpayment between Oct. 1 and April 30 if electricity is the primary heat source and ALL of the following statements apply:

- Your household income is at or below 50% of the state median household income. Income may be verified on forms provided by North Star Electric Cooperative or by the local energy assistance provider.
- You enter into and make reasonable and timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household.
- You receive referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation or other programs likely to reduce your energy bills from North Star Electric Cooperative.

Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule does not completely stop winter disconnects.

Before disconnecting electric service to residential members between Oct. 1 and April 30, North Star Electric must provide:

- A 30-day mailed notice or 15-day hand-delivered notice;
- A statement of members' rights and responsibilities;
- A list of local energy assistance providers;
- Forms on which to request Cold Weather Rule protection; and
- A statement explaining available payment plans and other options to continue service.

ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) is a federally funded program through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which helps low-income renters and homeowners pay for home heating

costs and furnace repairs. Household income must be at 50% of the state median income (\$68,845 for a family of four) to qualify for benefits.

To learn more about the EAP program or to apply for assistance:

- Visit the Minnesota Department of Commerce Energy Assistance website, <https://mn.gov/commerce/consumers/consumer-assistance/energy-assistance/>, for more details and to access the application portal.
- Contact your county EAP service provider for additional information and assistance.

North Star Electric Cooperative exists because of you, and we are dedicated to the people and communities we serve. If you are having difficulty paying your electric bill and do not qualify for either of these programs, please contact us immediately to work out a mutually agreeable payment plan.

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' US ON FACEBOOK TO STAY UP TO DATE

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

 /northstarelectric

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.