



# Volts and Jolts

Published monthly for the members of  
**RED LAKE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, Inc.**

*One of the Minnkota Power Systems*

SERVING THE FOUR-COUNTY AREA OF MARSHALL, PENNINGTON, RED LAKE AND POLK

VOL. 46 – NO. 03

RED LAKE FALLS (RED LAKE COUNTY), MINNESOTA 56750

JANUARY 2011

## Member Meetings

Opportunity for information,  
discussion, fellowship

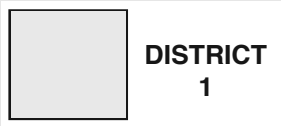
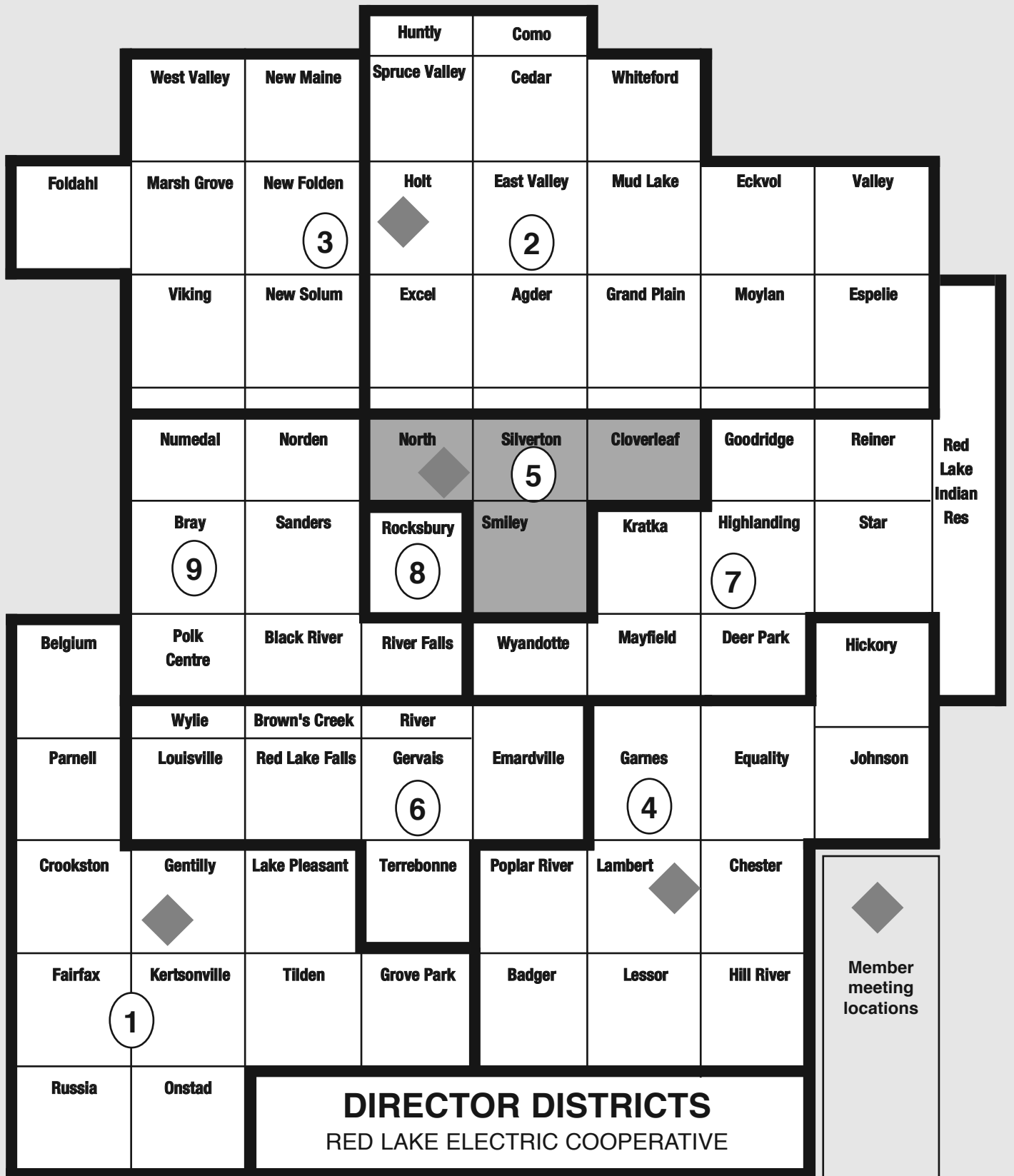
Meetings for the members of Red Lake Electric Cooperative will be held at four locations within the Cooperative's service territory. Meetings will be held within Districts 1, 4, 2 and 5 .

The meetings are held to inform attendees on current issues and programs associated with the Cooperative. Official business will be conducted at the four district meetings, which will include the election of a director candidate.

Even though a meeting may not be scheduled within the district in which you reside, you are welcome to attend a meeting of your choice. Anyone requiring special access or assistance at any one of the meeting sites should call Red Lake Electric in advance so arrangements can be made. Door prizes will be awarded and lunch will be served at each meeting.

### 2011 Member Meeting Schedule

| Day, Date, Time             | Meeting    | Location   |
|-----------------------------|------------|--|
| Tuesday, Feb. 1, 7:00 p.m.  | District 1 | St. Peters Catholic Church, Gentilly                 |
| Thursday, Feb. 3, 1:30 p.m. | District 4 | Community Center, Oklee                              |
| Monday, Feb. 7, 1:30 p.m.   | District 2 | Nazareth Lutheran Church, Holt                       |
| Tuesday, Feb. 7, 7:00 p.m.  | District 5 | Community Church, East of Thief River Falls on Hwy 1 |



### MEMBER MEETING DISTRICTS

## Director needed in District 2

Robert Olson to forgo the last of his three year term as director

Cooperative members in District 2, which covers the NE portion of Red Lake Electric's service territory, will elect a new director to represent them on the Cooperative's Board of Directors. Current director Robert Olson was re-elected to a three year term in 2009 but has decided to step down from his role as director of District 2 with one year of his term remaining.

A special district meeting will be held Monday, February 7, 1:30 p.m. at Nazareth Lutheran Church in Holt to elect a director candidate to fulfill the remaining year of the term. A regular district meeting will be held in 2012 to elect a director candidate for the successive three year term.

District 2 includes all members living in the following townships in Marshall County: Como, Huntly, Spruce Valley, Cedar, Whiteford, Mudlake, East Valley, Holt, Excel, Adger, Grand Plain, Moylan, and Espelie.

Nominations for director will be sought at the special district meeting. If more than one member is nominated, an election will be held at the meeting to determine the director nominee. The candidate's name will be placed on the ballot for election at the Cooperative's annual meeting March 30.

Other member's names can also be placed on the annual meeting ballot by petition. At least 15 members of the respective district must sign (4703002.01 Alan Swanson) a nomination petition and return it to the Cooperative by February 28, 2011. Nomination petition forms are available by calling or visiting the Cooperative's office in Red Lake Falls.

Members considering running for the position of director should note the article located elsewhere in this issue that defines qualifications for being a director.

If you have additional questions on director responsibilities or meeting schedules, contact Olson at 218-449-3345 or Roger Johannek, general manager, at 800-245-6068.



Robert Olson

## Retail rates to increase with April 2011 billing

Red Lake Electric Cooperative's board of directors recently approved a retail rate increase which will on average, increase the cost to members an average of 14.3% beginning with the monthly billing in April of 2011. The increase in rates is needed to offset a 5% rate increase from Minnkota Power Cooperative that occurred in December, 2010 and a 16.9% increase Minnkota is planning for March of this year. For on peak usage, the rate increase will amount to \$13.88 per month for an average monthly usage of 1,000 kWh's. For members using 1,500 kWh's per month, the rate increase will amount to \$20 per month. For off-peak usage, the increase will amount to \$106 per heating season for those using 20,000 kWh's, the annual average energy used by residential customers.

Members will also see a continuation of seasonal rates that were first implemented with the Cooperative's retail rate increase in July of 2007. Seasonal rates, for most, will be higher in the winter months or billing periods of January, February and March, and lower rates the

remaining nine months of the year.

Higher retail rates in the winter are the result of the higher wholesale cost of electricity for those months, as well as increased distribution system costs associated with rising winter peak demands for energy.

Even with energy conservation measures encouraged by the Cooperatives rebate program and the response by customers who have used these rebates to upgrade to more energy efficient heating systems and appliances, the demand for energy, especially over peak periods continues to increase.

This system peak, which occurs in winter, is determined when all off-peak loads have been shed and only on peak loads are placing demand on the system. The cost to meet these peak demand loads need to be reflected in the cost of providing that energy to customers. It is hoped the higher retail winter rates will encourage members to be more energy conservation minded during the time of year it impacts our cost of providing that service the most.

A summary comparing Red

Lake Electric's present rates to the new rates that customers will pay effective with the April 2011 is located on page 8.

### In this month's *Volts and Jolts*

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## Manager's Comments

by Roger Johanneck



## Rate increase

As you may already have read elsewhere in the *Volts and Jolts*, our rates will increase with the bill you receive in April 2011. None of us like getting news that electric rates are going up, but it is the reality of the business we are in today. There is a strong mandate to make the energy generated from coal cleaner and that cost is reflected in the bill you are paying today and the increase you will see in April.

Minnkota has made substantial environmental upgrades to their coal fired generation plants but there are also other factors that have had an impact on their cost of doing business. I encourage you to read the article "Wholesale energy costs on the rise" printed in this issue of the *Volts and Jolts* for a review of why Minnkota's cost to generate electricity have gone up.

Some of you may be tiring of our regular dose of stories as to why wholesale power costs have gone up, and the impact it has had on your monthly bill; we want to keep you informed as best we can. Hopefully the information we have shared has helped you make decisions on what you can do to offset some of these increased costs; namely, with energy efficient upgrades to your homes and businesses.

Red Lake Electric's conservation improvement program provides incentives to help you use less energy and save you money on your monthly energy bill. I encourage you to think energy efficiency

when you make decisions about the products, appliances and heating system you use in your homes and business's. Efficiency and conservation continue to be the best ways to confront rising energy costs.

I know there are a number of you that are still heating your home with uncontrolled electric energy and are paying the full on-peak rate for that service. If you haven't considered what (4928001.06 Rodney Bjerklie) it would cost to upgrade your heating system to take advantage of the lower off-peak rate, we can help you find answers to questions about the feasibility or pay-back of making an upgrade. Please give us or your local heating contractor a call.

There is also a host of internet web sites that are a good source for energy saving ideas; a list of these website addresses is a regular staple in this newsletter. I encourage you to check it out; there are a number simple ways to save energy that require little or no investment.

### Richard Gervais Retires:

I want to congratulate Richard Gervais on his retirement from the Cooperative on December 1st. I also want to thank him for his service to our members and the important role he played in making the Cooperative a reliable provider of energy to the members for the past 37 years. Our best to you Richard as you begin your retirement; may it be a long and happy one for you.

### Membership Meetings:

It is that time of year again, when the Cooperative holds its District-Membership meetings through out our service area. I encourage you to check out the meeting schedule included in this month's issue of the *Volts and Jolts* and welcome members to join us for one of the meetings located in your area. Our meeting format will be similar to previous years where we will provide information that we think you will find interesting and helpful, give you a chance to ask questions, and visit with RLEC staff and neighbors over pie and coffee. Hope to see you there.

## Hats off to:

Red Lake Cooperative members Jim & Theresa Schmitz of Red Lake Falls for their donation to RLEC to give toward the energy bill of some members in a time of need.



## VOTING DELEGATE CERTIFICATION

Members that are corporations, churches, townships, schools or other government units may vote at the district meeting. This form designating the voting delegate must be filled out, signed by officers and presented at the district meeting registration desk.

The \_\_\_\_\_ has, at an official  
name of member

meeting, designated \_\_\_\_\_  
name of delegate

to represent us at the 2011 District Meeting of the Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Attest \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman or President

Attest \_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk or Secretary

## STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc. is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Rural Electrification Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provide that no person in the United States on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or handicap shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is Roger Johanneck, Manager.

Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above from and/or file a written complaint with this organization; or the Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250; or the Administrator, Rural Electrification Administration, Washington, D.C. 20250. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.

## RED LAKE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, Inc. VOLTS & JOLTS

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### OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT ..... Kelly Lundeen  
VICE PRESIDENT ..... Bonnie Christians  
SECRETARY-TREASURER ..... Henry Wieland  
DIRECTORS ..... Robert Olson,  
Robert Finstad, Steven Linder, Joyce Johnson,  
Mark Hanson, Peter Mosbeck

Subscription Rate ..... \$2.50 per year

## NOTICE

Hidden within the text of the articles on pages 1, 2, 3 and the back page of this issue of the *Volts & Jolts* are the names and account numbers of five RLEC members. They will appear within the articles in parenthesis as such (99-99-99-999-99 Roger P. Member). If you find your name and account number, clip it out and send it with your next payment. You will be credited with \$5 on your electric bill.

# Annual Meeting March 30

Red Lake Electric Cooperative members are encouraged to mark their calendars for the Cooperative's annual meeting. The meeting will be called at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 30, at the Ralph Engelstad Arena in Thief River Falls.



## Director elections to be held

Red Lake Electric Cooperative members in District 1, 4, 5 and 2 will soon elect directors to represent them. The initial elections will take place at the upcoming district meetings. Final election will occur at the Cooperative's annual meeting March 30 if there is more than one nominee.

Districts 1, 4 and 5 are currently represented by Bonnie Christians, Steve Linder and Mark Hanson, respectively. District 2 is represented by Robert Olson who is relinquishing his position.

Directors must be members residing in the district they represent and have no conflicts of interest regarding Red Lake Electric Cooperative. Any candidate for director must have his or her name stated as the "member" on the Cooperative's records.

For more information on director qualifications and responsibilities contact Roger Johanneck, general manager, at 800-245-6068 or 218-253-2168.

## Red Lake Electric Cooperative

## Director qualifications requirements

No member shall be eligible to become or remain a director who:

- Is not a member of the Cooperative, receiving electric service at the member's primary residence in the district from which the director is elected.

- Within three years preceding a director candidate's nomination was an employee of the Cooperative.

- Is or becomes, or at any time during the three (3) years preceding a director candidate's nomination shall have been employed by a labor union, which represents, or has represented, or has endeavored to represent any employees of the Cooperative.

- Is a parent, spouse or cohabitant of any employee of the Cooperative.

- Is a person who is a parent, spouse or cohabitant of an incumbent director who is not up for re-election at that time.

- Is in any way employed by or substantially financially interested in an enterprise competing with the Cooperative or any Cooperative-affiliated businesses.

- Is or becomes the full-time employee or agent of, or who is or becomes the full-time employer or principal of, another director.

## Director nomination and election procedure

The procedure for which directors can be nominated and elected for Red Lake Electric Cooperative is outlined in Article II, Section 10, of the Cooperative's Bylaws. That section reads as follows:

**SECTION 10. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF DIRECTORS.** (a) Nomination at District Meetings. Not less than forty days nor more than sixty days before any meeting at which directors are to be elected, the board of directors shall call a separate meeting of the members of each district from which directors are to be elected, at a suitable place in such district for the purpose of selecting a candidate for director to represent the members located within such district. The notice of such meeting shall be delivered to each member located in such district as provided in Section 2 of this Article and shall indicate the district to which such member belongs. The notice shall state that nominations for a director are to be made at the meeting. The district meeting shall be called to order by the director representing the district or by another designated representative of the board of directors, or in his absence, by any members residing in the district. The members shall then proceed to elect a chairman, who shall be someone other than a director, and who shall appoint a secretary to act for the duration of the meeting. Members of other districts present at the meeting may be heard but shall have no vote. Nominations for candidates for director shall be made from the floor at the meeting, and any member residing in the district shall have the right to nominate one candidate. The meeting shall remain open for nominations until no further nominations are forthcoming.

Candidates must be members residing in the district and must possess the qualifications for director specified in Section 2 of Article III of these bylaws. Voting shall be by ballot and proxy voting shall not be permitted at any district meeting. Each member may vote for one candidate. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared the official candidate of the district. In case of a tie, the winner shall be determined by the flip of a coin. The minutes of the district meeting shall set forth, among other matters, the name of each person nominated at the meeting and the number of votes received by each and shall specify the official candidate of the district. A certified copy of the minutes signed by the Secretary and the Chairman of the district meeting shall be delivered to the secretary of the Cooperative at the following meeting of the board. (b) Nomination of Directors by Petition. Nomination for director can also be made by petition. Fifteen (15) or more members may make a nomination in writing to the Secretary over their signatures not less than thirty (30) days prior to the annual meeting. This petition nomination must be in the format prescribed by the Secretary. Blank nomination petitions shall be available to all members at the Cooperative office. All petition nominees shall be listed in the notice of annual meeting and their names shall be printed on the election ballot. (c) Election of Directors. At the annual meeting, the Secretary of the Cooperative shall place in nomination the names of the official candidates of each district. Election of directors shall be by printed or mimeographed ballot, separate ballots to be provided for each district, listing the candidates in alphabetical order. Only members of a district shall be entitled to vote for director to be elected from that district, and each member or member's spouse shall be entitled to vote for one candidate from the district, in which he is a member. The candidate from each receiving the highest number of votes at this meeting shall be declared elected as director. In the case of a tie vote, the winner shall be determined by the flip of a coin. Notwithstanding anything contained in this section, failure to comply with any of the provisions of this section shall not affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any election of directors.

## NOTICE TO MEMBERS

The Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc., of Red Lake Falls, as an operating electric utility in the state of Minnesota, is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from co-generators and small power producers.

The cooperative will provide information relating to the said interconnections to all interested member-consumers of the cooperative free of charge upon request.

Any disputes between the cooperative and its member-consumers over interconnection, sales and purchases are subject to resolution by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.



# Recipe corner

### Chili in Bread Bowls

- 1 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/8 tsp. pepper
- 1/2 lb. each - lean beef stew meat, boneless skinless chicken breast and boneless pork, cut into cubes
- 1 tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 medium green pepper, chopped
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1 can (28 ounces) diced tomatoes, drained
- 1 can (16 ounces) kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can 15-12 ounces) navy beans or great northern beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (8 ounces) tomato sauce
- 1 tbsp chili powder
- 1 garlic clove

In a large resealable plastic bag, combine the flour, salt and pepper. Add meat in batches; toss to coat. In a large skillet, brown meat in oil in batches. Transfer to a 5-qt. slow cooker with a slotted spoon. Stir in onion, peppers, tomatoes, beans, tomato sauce and seasonings. Cover and cook on low for 7-8 hours or until the meat is tender. Cut tops off rolls; carefully hollow out bottom halves. Spoon about 1 cup of chili into each roll. Garnish with sour cream, onions and red pepper it desired. Yield: 9 servings.

Editor's Note: When cutting or seeding hot peppers, use rubber or plastic gloves to protect your hands. Avoid touching your face.

### Barbecued Beef Chili

- 7 tsp. chili powder
- 1 tbsp. garlic powder
- 2 tsp. celery seed
- 1 tsp. coarsely ground pepper
- 1/4 to 1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper
- 1 fresh beef brisket (3-4 lbs) (not corned beef)

### Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.

## Operating Report

### MONTHLY COMPARISON

|                                       | NOVEMBER<br>2009 | NOVEMBER<br>2010 |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Total Revenue . . . . .               | \$ 914,580       | \$ 867,199       |
| Total Margins . . . . .               | \$ 28,670        | \$ 21,300        |
| Cost of Power . . . . .               | \$ 660,659       | \$ 647,217       |
| KWH's Purchased . . . . .             | 12,901,754       | 11,663,677       |
| Capital Credits Paid to Estates . . . | \$ 5,242         | \$ 8,813         |

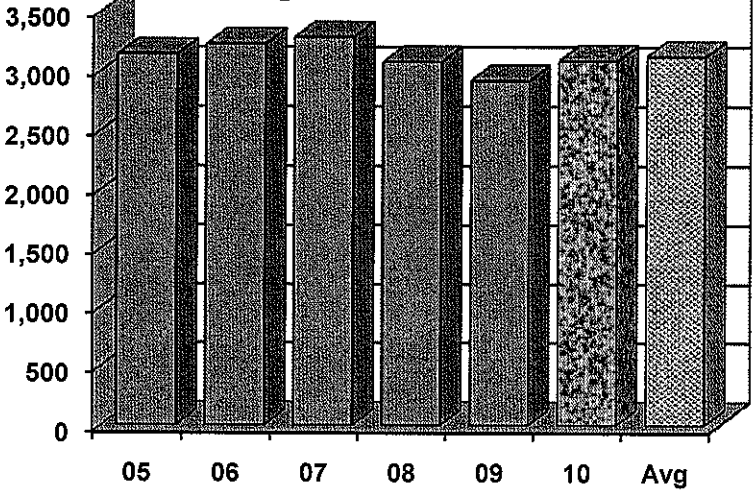
### YEAR TO DATE COMPARISON

|                                       | NOVEMBER<br>2009 | NOVEMBER<br>2010 |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Total Revenue . . . . .               | \$ 9,139,424     | \$ 9,912,732     |
| Total Margins . . . . .               | \$ 645,352       | \$ 411,163       |
| Cost of Power . . . . .               | \$ 5,948,821     | \$ 6,781,297     |
| KWH's Purchased . . . . .             | 126,831,540      | 120,985,440      |
| New Service Connections . . . . .     | 54               | 45               |
| Customers Served . . . . .            | 5,195            | 5,204            |
| Capital Credits Paid to Estates . . . | \$ 74,002        | \$ 82,214        |
| Miles of Line                         |                  |                  |
| Overhead . . . . .                    | 2,319            | 2,325            |
| Underground . . . . .                 | 235              | 235              |

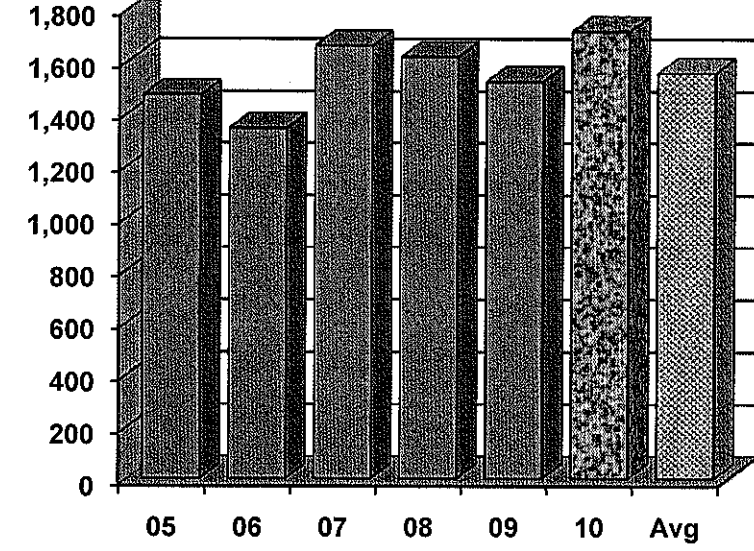
# DEGREE DAYS

To determine degree days, you must calculate the daily mean temperature for the time period you are measuring. Degree day computation is based on the assumption that a building does not require any heat if the outside temperature averages 65 degrees during a 24-hour period. To obtain a degree day figure, the high temperature and the low temperature for the day are added and the total divided by two. That figure is then subtracted from 65. For example, if the high temperature was 30 degrees and the low temperature 10 degrees, the figure would be 30+10=40; 40/2=20; 65-20=45. This would be a 45-degree day. The higher the degree day figure, the more heat required to warm your home.

### YEAR TO DATE DEGREE DAYS August 20 to December 20



### DEGREE DAYS November 20 to December 20



- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 bottle (12 ounces) chili sauce
- 1 cup ketchup
- 1/2 cup barbecue sauce
- 1/3 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/4 cup cider vinegar
- 1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp. ground mustard
- 1 can (15-1/2 ounces) hot chili beans

Combine the first five ingredients; rub over brisket. Cut into eight pieces; place in a slow cooker. Combine the green pepper, onion, chili sauce, ketchup, barbecue sauce, brown sugar, vinegar, Worcestershire sauce and mustard; pour over meat. Cover and cook on high for 5-6 hours or until meat is tender. Remove meat; cool slightly. Meanwhile, skim fat from cooking juices. Shred meat with two forks; return to slow cooker. Reduce heat to low. Stir in the beans. Cover and cook for 1 hour or until heated through. Yield: 12 servings.

### Lemon Dill Walleye

- 1 large onion
- 1 tbs. butter or stick margarine
- 4 cups water
- 1 tbs. snipped fresh dill or 1 tsp dill weed
- 3/4 cup fat-free milk
- 2 lbs. walleye, cod, halibut or orange roughly fillets

In a large skillet, saute onion in butter until tender. Add water and dill; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 4-5 minutes. Add milk; stir in lemons and pepper. Top with fillets. Cover and simmer for 12-15 minutes or until fish flakes easily with a fork. Transfer fish to a serving platter and keep warm. Strain cooking liquid, reserving lemons, onion and dill; serve with fish. Yield: 8 servings.

Nutritional Analysis: One serving (calculated with walleye and butter) equals 116 calories, 2 g fat (trace saturated fat), 70mg cholesterol, 113 mg sodium, 5 g carbohydrate, 1 9 fiber, 18 g protein. Diabetic Exchanges: 2-1/2 very lean meat, 1 vegetable.

### Meaty Mushroom Chili

- 1 pound bulk italian sausage
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 chopped onion
- 1 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 1 can (46 ounces) V8 juice
- 1 can (6 ounces) tomato paste
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 tsp. dried basil
- 1/2 tsp. pepper
- sour cream optional

In a large saucepan, cook the sausage, beef and onion over medium heat until the meat is no longer pink; drain. Stir in the mushrooms, V8 juice, tomato paste and seasonings. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 1 hour. Garnish with sour cream if desired. Yield: a servings.

### Vegetarian Chili

- 4 medium zucchini, chopped
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 1 medium green pepper, chopped
- 1 medium sweet red pepper, chopped
- 4 garlic cloves
- 1/4 cup olive or canola oil
- 2 cans (28 ounces each) italian stewed tomatoes, cut up
- 1 can (15 ounces) tomato sauce
- 1 can (15 ounces) pinto beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1/4 cup each minced fresh cilantro and parsely
- 2 tbsp. chili powder
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. ground cumin

In a Dutch oven, saute zucchini, onions, peppers and garlic in oil until tender. Stir in the tomatoes, tomato sauce, beans, jalapeno and seasonings. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Yield: 16 servings. Nutritional Analysis: One serving (1 cup) equals 131 calories, 4 g fat (trace saturated fat), 0 cholesterol, 622 mg sodium, 18 g carbohydrate, 6 g fiber, 5 g protein. Diabetic Exchanges: 1 starch, 1 vegetable, 1 fat.

Editor's Note: When cutting or seeding hot peppers, use rubber or plastic gloves to protect your hands. Avoid touching your face.

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Tues 8:30-6  
Wed 8:30-6  
Thurs 8:30-8  
Fri 8:30-6  
Sat 8:30-3  
Sun closed

**"2nd Edition" 50% OFF all items during January**

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**Downtown, Red Lake Falls**  
122 Main Avenue S  
(218) 253-4304

## Informational Web Sites

The following is a list of Web sites that can provide information and education in reference to electrical safety and energy conservation. These Web sites are listed as links on Red Lake Electric Cooperative's Web site at [www.redlakeelectric.com](http://www.redlakeelectric.com).

- Electrical Safety Foundation International: [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org)
- Alliance to Save Energy: [www.ase.org](http://www.ase.org)
- US Environmental Protection Agency: [www.epa.gov/greenhomes](http://www.epa.gov/greenhomes)
- Energy Star: [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)
- Minnesota Safety Council: [www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org](http://www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org)
- Safe Electricity: [www.safeelectricity.org](http://www.safeelectricity.org)
- Lighting Controls Association: [www.aboutlightingcontrols.org](http://www.aboutlightingcontrols.org)
- US Consumer Product Safety Commission: [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)

## Agassiz NWR loses longtime employee Gary Tischer

Gary Tischer, Wildlife Refuge Specialist, retired at the end of December after working for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for nearly 37 years. Tischer began his career with the Service in 1973 at the Fergus Falls Wetland Management District (WMD) working there from 1973-1976. In the fall-winter of 1974-1975

he worked on a special project at the Detroit Lakes WMD which was located at Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), moved to Big Stone NWR in 1976 then on to Litchfield WMD in 1979. He left Minnesota in 1981 and worked on the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife & Fish Refuge until July 1984 when he returned to Minnesota and settled in at Agassiz NWR.

He was persistent in trying to get his first job with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "During my last year in college I would either make a weekly phone call or a weekly visit to the Twin Cities Regional Office to let the Fish and Wildlife Service people know that I wanted to work for the agency. Two months after graduation I was offered a job and have been with them throughout my wildlife career. When I was given the Agassiz NWR position in 1984, I was very excited to become part of the Agassiz NWR staff because in August 1977 I was detailed to Agassiz for two days and observed so many ducks and wildlife species I thought this was a great duck and wildlife paradise."

He is well known throughout Northwest Minnesota. He has been the conduit between Agassiz and the communities, schools, scouts, sportsmen and Audubon groups, youth programs and the media for 26 years. (5827003.02 John H. Hanson) He has been an active participant for years in Envirothon, hunter safety classes, and building and promoting the Minnesota Pine to Prairie Birding Trail.

Under his leadership the refuge has become more accessible to the public. Through his efforts the refuge now has three walking trails, several overlooks and wildlife and photography blinds, new interpretive signs, benches and scopes, and up-to-date brochures. He orchestrated all Refuge Centennial Cele-



Gary Tischer

brations in 2003. Gary has certainly left his mark at Agassiz NWR.

"Gary has been a valuable team member in all refuge activities - wildlife surveys, prescribed burning, flooding response, native prairie and oak savannah restoration, environmental education, public safety - to mention a few", said Maggie Anderson, Refuge Manager. "He has been the institutional memory on this station through many changes. We will miss his positive and helpful attitude as well."

Because of his dedicated efforts our fish and wildlife resources, the public, and his fellow employees have benefited.

When asked to look over the highlights of his career he said "I tried to help make the best quality habitat for wildlife and teach people about wildlife and the natural resources wherever my job was located. As far as jobs completed airboat night lighting to capture diving ducks and banding them was the most fun job I did during my career and that was at Agassiz NWR. Spending two weeks on the tundra working on the long term Canada goose study near Churchill, Manitoba was a very unique experience. I am sure I will miss all wildlife personnel that I have had contact with and the wildlife and natural resources themselves until I get into a different daily routine."

He and his wife, Brenda, plan on staying in Thief River Falls. They have three children, Teresa Olson (Dan), Bagley; Nathan, Callaway; and Tiffany - a UND student. What are his immediate plans to fill the work schedule hours? "Ice-fishing on Lake of the Woods whenever I want to."

The staff at Agassiz wish him a long, happy, healthy and well deserved retirement. We know we will be calling him for advice.

## Wholesale energy cost on the rise

New state laws, federal environmental mandates and changes throughout the energy industry are causing wholesale power costs to rise for Red Lake Electric Cooperative.

Minnkota Power Cooperative, our wholesale energy provider, has implemented a 5 percent wholesale rate increase that became effective Dec. 20, 2010, and a subsequent rate increase of approximately 17 percent will likely be applied in March 2011. Minnkota's average wholesale rate will rise to just more than 6 cents/kilowatt-hour (kWh) in 2011, compared to 5.2 cents/kWh in 2010.

There are many factors that impact wholesale electric rates, but there are two major items that are driving up costs. The first item is the major emission control projects mandated by the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

To remain compliant with EPA emission regulations, Minnkota will spend more than \$425 million on emission control equipment for the Milton R. Young Station, a lignite-fueled generating plant located near Center, N.D.

The upgrades at the Young Station will help remove 95 percent of sulfur dioxide (SO2) emissions and reduce 60 percent of nitrogen oxides (NOx) emissions. Further investment is needed in support systems and electrical infrastructure to operate the emission controls.

By 2012, the environmental upgrades to remain in full compliance with current federal environmental standards will be completed. These upgrades will allow the Young Station to continue to be the Minnkota's primary source of generation for a few decades.

The second item that increases Minnkota's costs is related to wind energy contracts.

To prepare to meet the Minnesota Renewable Energy Standard and the North Dakota Renewable Energy Objective, Minnkota contracted with NextEra Energy Resources to begin purchasing significant wind energy resources in 2007, 2008 and 2009. About 1.3 billion kWh annu-

ally are purchased from NextEra, a wind energy developer, under 25-year contracts.

It is expected that the decision to enter wind contracts now, rather than later, will provide the lowest long-term renewable energy cost. Unfortunately, in the short term, Minnkota is contracted to pay an over-market price for the wind energy. Minnkota's average contract energy purchase price is currently higher than the depressed wholesale energy market, causing a significant loss on selling the wind energy not needed by its customers. The shortfall in 2011 is expected to be about \$20 million.

Due to the economic recession, lower demand for electricity has driven wholesale energy market prices down - about 50 percent below average. Major manufacturing and industrial shutdown across the Midwest has contributed to the drop in electricity usage. Minnkota participates in the wholesale energy market to both buy when additional electricity is needed and to sell when electricity resources exceed its load.

In response to the 2009 revenue shortfall created by the reduced wholesale energy market, a one half cent per kWh energy surcharge was instituted. Because the wholesale energy market prices remain low, the (7130003.01 Wayne Capistran) surcharge was extended through 2011.

While maintaining compliance and reliability have required significant investment, Minnkota's rates remain competitive with other power suppliers in the region. Minnkota management will continue to scrutinize its operations in search of budget savings; however, many of the increases are based on fixed costs, compliance with state and federal standards and prior commitments that must be met. Even with the challenges of cost increases being experienced, it is Minnkota's pledge to continue to keep its electricity as the best energy value in the region.



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VOLTS AND JOLTS FEATURE OF THE MONTH

Nancy Vraa turns hobby into enterprise and opens natural fiber studio and store

How do you turn a favorite pastime into an enterprise that shares your passion with other artists? With a little help.

Nancy Vraa of rural Red Lake Falls has been working with elements of the fiber arts since she was a little girl. She would travel on her bicycle to the home of two of her favorite neighbors who took the time to instruct her in the craft of knitting.

She admits that her early work was rudimentary but her mentors happily continued to encourage her. As she grew older she gravitated to other interests but in recent years has jumped back into the craft as well as expanded into other aspects of the hobby. She now owns a spinning wheel and attends workshops with other spinners who enjoy sharing their experiences and helping each other improve thier skills.

Vraa has noticed an increase in the number of artists getting involved in the fiber arts from spinning yarn to knitting a myriad of hand made garments and accessories. She enjoys sharing her interests and experiences in the fiber arts with other accomplished artists as well as people new to the hobby.

Noticing a need for quality natural fibers and a place to gather to explore the art, Vraa decided to establish a studio in a building at her home. Along with the studio, Vraa envisioned a store in the studio that could supply the artisans with quality fibers, needles and accessories.

She also sells local pottery and jewelry. Some of the many knitting materials she has on hand include alpaca, wool blends, 100% wool, sock yarn, and lace.

Vraa admits that the vision was easier than figuring out where to begin making the dream a reality. She discovered that there are people and organization in the region that are keenly interested in helping entre-

preneurs get started in a way that ensures a better chance of success.

One such enterprise was a small business development service located in the Valley Technology park in Crookston. This service helped Vraa get in touch with a consultant based out of the Bemidji Northwest Small Business Development Center on the Bemidji State University Campus. That consultant was Bob Knudsen who luckily lived in Red Lake Falls and was able to work with her right at home.

Knudsen help to steer Vraa in the right direction and helped in planning for the financial startup costs. This opened the door to seeking alternative funding sources to augment her personal investment.

One source was the Red Lake County Economic Development Corporation in Red Lake Falls that offers low interest loans for county residents looking to create jobs or maintain viability. Once again she was working with people she knew in her home town.

The artistic side of her endeavor made it possible to submit a grant application to the Arts Council of the Northwest Regional Development Commission located in Warren. Mara Witman of the arts council guided Vraa through the process to ensure the grant proposal fit the goals of the grant funding. The arts council helps many area organizations and artists provide services to thier respective communities.

With funding in hand and a solid business plan she began renovation of the studio building and the purchasing of inventory.

Looking back at the process of starting a business, Vraa is thankful that she utilized the local resources instead of going at it alone. The people who are involved in helping new upstarts like Vraa may have saved

Nancy Vraa, owner of the newly established Gosh Yarn It studio and store is helping a person who has immersed herself in the hobby of knitting. Vraa helps the student knit a small sock using a four needle method and a set of detailed instructions. She demonstrated the techniques by knitting right along side the student.

her from many missteps and headaches that can plague the newcomer on the business scene.

Upon opening her doors in late November 2010, Vraa has welcomed many patrons and students into her studio where she pro-

vides help and knowledge. Students can bring their own yarn and needles and she helps on their own design or on a pattern.

Her store is open 6 to 10 p.m. on Tuesday-Thursday and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday. If you call Nancy Vraa to set up a

class or get information, you may have to leave a message. The studio is a place of tranquility where the artists can work in peace and without unwanted interruptions. The artists are in the studio. At least for now the phone will stay in the house.

The Red Lake Falls public library currently displays a wide array of the work of some of Nancy Vraa's students she teaches at her newly opened business. Gosh Yarn It! is a place where knitters can purchase various products and raw materials as well as learn a few new skills.

The shelves and displays that line the walls of the Gosh Yarn It studio overflow with various types of natural fibers from a wide range of sources. Along with a healthy amount of the necessary tools and accessories, examples of Vraa's work as that of some her students can be found scattered among the displays.

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Minnkota CEO Loer retires

After 43 years as a Minnkota Power Cooperative employee and more than 20 years as president & CEO, David Loer retired Jan. 7, 2011.

Loer grew up on a farm near Humboldt, Minn., and attended Stephen High School. He graduated with honors from the University of North Dakota, where he earned both bachelor's and master's degrees in accounting. He wrote and successfully passed the certified public accountant (CPA) exam in 1966.

During his career at Minnkota, Loer served on several industry committees and boards, allowing him to be both an educator and a spokesperson in the industry. In 1995, he received the Toastmasters International Communication and Leadership Award, which recognized his ability to speak to diverse audiences about topics such as the value of coal-based power generation and other energy-related issues. He was honored by the electric industry with the Nikola Tesla Award in 2001 and the Ambassador of Lignite Award in 2010.



David Loer

During Loer's tenure, Minnkota has consistently ranked as one of the lowest cost wholesale electric energy suppliers in the nation. The Milton R. Young Station, located near Center, N.D., has been a key to maintaining safe, reliable and affordable electricity for Minnkota and its member-owner cooperatives. Minnkota also set several generation records at the Young Station during Loer's term.

Loer's legacy includes what he did to help the cooperative be positioned well after he leaves.

Under his leadership:

The Minnkota Joint System has met renewable energy standards and objectives; Minnkota's future energy supply has been secured through at least 2030;

The cooperative has begun building a new transmission line to transport both baseload and renewable energy to its service area;

The Young Station has undergone upgrades to meet current federal emission control standards.

Loer and his wife, Judi, who reside in East Grand Forks, Minn., have four children and 13 grandchildren.

Gervais retires after 37 years

Dick Gervais' employment with Red Lake Electric Cooperative spanned more than 37 years when he retired from the Cooperative in December. His employment began in June of 1973 on a part-time basis until he was hired full time in February, 1974. "I started two weeks after graduating from high school and the Cooperative is the only



Dick Gervais

place I have worked full time," said Gervais.

After being hired fulltime Gervais worked one year as a groundman. He worked four years as an apprentice lineman achieving the status of a journeyman lineman in April of 1979. For his first 13 years of employment Gervais worked on Ira Loeffler's line construction crew.

In October, 1986 Gervais was promoted to a lead lineman. He held this position for two years until he was promoted to a crew foreman in December of 1988. Gervais then led a construction crew for 22 years until his retirement.

When reflecting on the past, Gervais said the greatest change over the years was the upgrades of equipment and tools. "When I began working at the Cooperative we used pike poles and hand tamps to set poles. Everything was drilled with a hand brace and we climbed

Time to get moving

By Holly Israel

Walk off health worries? Dance away from disease? According to the Harvard School of Public Health, you can, as exercise-by helping you maintain a healthy weight and lowering stress levels-prevents chronic problems like heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, and certain types of cancer.

Despite these benefits, only 30 percent of Americans engage in regular physical activity, while 40 percent almost never exercise. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends healthy adults fit in at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity five days a week.

This includes brisk walking-ideal since it requires no equipment, specific time or place, and can be done at each individual's pace-as well as chopping wood, mowing the lawn with a push mower, or even dancing. In a workplace setting, use stairs instead of the elevator, park your car further away from the entrance, or take a walk for 20-30 minutes during a lunch hour.

For a more vigorous approach, work out for at least 20 minutes three days per week. A "vigorous" workout should result in a higher heart rate, rapid breathing, and conversation occurring in shorter sentences. Jogging is a good example of a more vigorous activity.

Pump it Up

As you age, strength training helps you maintain the ability to perform everyday tasks such as climbing stairs, carrying your own groceries, etc. It's a good idea to get guidance from an expert in this area.

Flexibility training is the final component to any exercise routine. Stretching for about five minutes before and after workouts reduces soreness and injury, and also will aid in preserving the range of movement needed to function normally.

If your present lifestyle could be categorized as sedentary, begin exercising slowly, and gradually increase the duration of your workouts. The health benefits will be noticeable.

Remember that some movement is better than none, and more is even better!

Editor's Note: Before beginning any exercise regimen, please consult a physician.

Source: Harvard School of Public Health, American College of Sports Medicine

Holly Israel writes on general health topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

Staying on top of unsafe products

By Christine Smith

Each year, thousands of product recalls-many of them electrical devices --occur in the United States. Given that some recalls involve items that have already done great harm, it's important to stay on top of developments.

Recalls begin in two ways: A federal regulatory agency issues a mandatory recall, or the manufacturer voluntarily recalls the product after receiving information that it could be unsafe.

Stay on top of the dozens of recalls that are issued every week with these key sources:

Recalls.gov

Six government agencies joined forces to create www.recalls.gov. The site pulls its information from the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the Food and Drug Administration, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Coast Guard, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

In addition to having the latest information, www.recalls.gov allows users to keyword search through its archives.

The website also boasts a mobile phone application, which enables consumers to have information when and where they need it. For example, at a yard sale or a day care center, a consumer can type in the name of a particular product to see if a recall has been issued.

Some of the agencies, including the CPSC, have RSS feeds, which provide users with new information automatically every day. Some also use Facebook, Twitter, and other applications to share information easily.

ConsumerReports.org

This popular website contains a safety blog on recalls and additional information including illustrations of unsafe products. Users can sign up for the safety blog to receive information on a daily basis.

Sources: Recalls.gov; Consumer Reports

Christine Smith writes on electrical safety for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

**Contractor training set for February**

Minnkota Power Cooperative and the associated systems will host a contractor training program again in 2011. This marks the 23<sup>rd</sup> year of the successful program, which is aimed at providing area trade allies with the latest information in building and electrical practices.

The program begins Wednesday, Feb. 2, at the Doublewood Inn, Fargo, N.D. It continues at the Hampton Inn, Bemidji, Minn., on Wednesday, Feb. 9, and concludes at the Ramada Inn, Grand Forks, N.D., on Thursday, Feb. 10.

For more information about the program, contact Sue Black, Minnkota communications/member services specialist, at (701) 795-4292 or e-mail questions to [sblack@minnkota.com](mailto:sblack@minnkota.com).

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### Mission Statement

It is the mission of Red Lake Electric Cooperative to enhance the quality of life for people of our service area by consistently providing quality electric service and other valued services while holding our employees, our community and our environment in high regard.

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## Things you should know about your electric service

#### BILLINGS AND COLLECTION

You will receive your energy bill on or near the 20th of each month.

Payment of your monthly energy bill is due on the 20th of the month. You may pay your bill in person at RLEC during office hours, use the 24-hour drive-up drop box located next to the RLEC office, by Auto Pay, or by mail. Payment must be in the office, drop box, Auto Pay, or in the mail, as evidenced by the postmark, by the 5th day of the following month to avoid a late payment charge. A 1 1/2% monthly late payment charge will be computed on delinquent energy bills, the minimum late payment charge will be \$1.00.

If your payment is not received by the 15th of the month, a final notice of disconnection statement will be included on your following bill. The final notice statement will notify you when your electric service will be disconnected if the delinquent amount remains unpaid. If an employee is sent to disconnect your electric service, a \$50 collection fee will be charged to your account, even if you pay the collector.

To have a disconnected service reconnected, all amounts owing, a \$50 reconnection fee, and a security deposit must be paid. If the service must be reconnected after normal working hours, a \$100 reconnection fee must be paid.

#### METER TESTS

RLEC has a schedule in place to have its meters periodically tested for accuracy. Results from these tests show that meters generally slow down with age; however, if you think that your meter is recording too much usage, RLEC will test it for accuracy. You must pay a test fee in advance of the test. If the meter test shows that the meter was inaccurate, the test fee will be refunded to you.

#### STOPPED METERS

If you find your meter has stopped and you are using electricity, please contact the office immediately so we can replace it. Average consumption will be billed to the member for the time the meter was stopped so there is no advantage in not reporting a stopped meter.

#### METER READINGS

An automated meter reading system is utilized to obtain monthly meter readings. Although the system is normally reliable, there is always a chance that the correct reading has not been transmitted to the office for billing. Customers should periodically read their meter and compare it to the reading on the billing statement. If the actual reading is not close to the billing statement reading, please call the office.

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| First 500 KWH              | .....9.0¢ Kwh      |
| Over 500 KWH (April-Dec.)  | .....6.6¢ Kwh      |
| Over 500 KWH (Jan.-Mar.)   | .....7.5¢ Kwh      |

Multiphase users add \$17/month cost of service charge.

Standby, \$9/month (meter disconnected but the power line retained; standby is not available on services larger than 15 KVA transformer capacity).

Security light, \$7/month, high pressure sodium, \$8/month, mercury vapor; water heater flat credit, \$5/month (on January-April billing); off-peak equipment charge, \$4/month per heat meter; off-peak electric heat rate, 4.0¢/kWh long-term control, 5.8¢/kWh short-term control.

#### BAD CHECKS

A \$15 charge will be levied each time a check is returned because of nonsufficient funds, account being closed or payment stopped.

#### OUTAGES

In case your electricity goes out, please do the following:

1. Check your fuses or breakers at the yard pole or meter pedestal.
2. Call your neighbor to see if they are out of electricity also.
3. Call the RLEC office (218-253-2168 or 1-800-245-6068) during working hours or 218-253-2200 after hours. We will accept collect calls for outages only.

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# Efficiency Tax Credits drop, but don't disappear

## Benefit reverts to \$500 lifetime cap for upgrades

**By Megan McKoy-Noe, CCC**  
Energy efficiency improvements are great for lowering electric bills. But sometimes the up-front cost can be a drawback.

Since 2005, Congress has enacted a series of tax breaks for consumers who take steps to make their homes more energy efficient. In December, the outgoing 111th Congress approved extending some popular efficiency tax credits through Dec. 31, 2011, although at greatly reduced levels.

"While we were hopeful that the tax credits would be higher than what was approved, we are encouraged that this valuable incentive for homeowner investment was retained," says Leigh Faircloth, executive director of the South Carolina Association of Heating and Air Conditioning Contractors.

The federal Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010

reduces the total lifetime credit that can be claimed on energy efficiency improvements made between 2006 and 2011 (excluding 2008, when no credit was available) from \$1,500 to \$500. It also lowers the percentage of efficiency upgrade costs consumers can recover, from 30 percent in 2009-2010 to 10 percent in 2011.

"Basically, energy efficiency tax credits revert to levels approved for 2006 and 2007, before the federal stimulus bill pumped up the program," she explains. "There's also a lifetime cap of \$500 for any work that's done. But if you haven't applied for an energy efficiency tax credit before, this extension gives you a chance to recoup some of the costs needed to make your home more efficient."

There are also maximum allowances for different upgrades. For installing more efficient windows, the tax credit is limited to

\$200, and there's a \$300 cap for "any item of energy-efficient building property." Other restrictions include:

- **Furnaces (\$150):** Must have at least 95 percent (up from 90 percent) annual fuel utilization efficiency (AFUE). Oil furnaces and boilers were returned to the single furnace category at 95 percent AFUE.

- **Advanced main air circulating fan (\$50):** Must utilize less than 2 percent of a furnace's total energy consumption.

- **Central air conditioner (\$300):** Must have a seasonal energy efficiency ratio (SEER) of at least 16 and an energy efficiency rating (EER) of at least 13.

- **Air-source heat pump (\$300):** Must have at least a heating seasonal performance factor (HSPF) of 9, SEER of 16, and EER of 13.

- **Biomass fuel stove (\$300):** Must have a thermal efficiency rating of at least 75 percent

### Builders and Manufacturers Benefit, Too

The bill reinstates a credit of up to \$2,000 for builders (during 2010 and 2011) of energy-efficient residences that use no more than half the energy of a 2003 national model energy code home (the credit had expired in 2009). In addition, U.S.-based manufacturers of clothes washers, dishwashers, and refrigerators will receive credits ranging from \$25-\$200 for efficient appliance models produced in America during 2008, 2009, and 2010.

"While consumers cannot take these types of credits directly, these units may be promoted by manufacturers, or by state or utility efficiency programs, during the next two years," notes the Tax Incentives Assistance Project. The group operates a website, [s:nergystaxincentives.org](http://s:nergystaxincentives.org), devoted to tracking efficiency incentives.

### Renewable Tax Credits Remain Active

Renewable energy tax credits created by the federal stimulus bill don't expire until Dec. 31, 2016. These credits cover 30 percent of the cost of materials and installation for residential solar panels, solar water heaters, small wind turbines, and geothermal heat pumps. Details are available at [energystar.gov/taxcredits](http://energystar.gov/taxcredits).

### Claiming Tax Credits

Tax credits are beneficial because they directly reduce, dollar for dollar, any taxes you owe. Be sure to keep your receipts and your Manufacturer's Certification Statement (a signed statement from the manufacturer certifying that the product or component qualifies for the tax credit) for your records. Then claim the credit on your taxes using IRS Form 5695.

### Looking for Help?

Some electric cooperatives and state government offices offer additional subsidies or rebates to consumers who make their homes more energy efficient. For a list of federal, state, and local energy efficiency rebates and tax credits, visit the Database for State Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency, a project funded by the U.S. Department of Energy, at [www.dsireusa.org](http://www.dsireusa.org).

Megan McKoy-Noe, CCC, writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

# Some energy-saving devices may be too good to be true

**By Magen Howard**

"If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is." That saying rings especially true when it comes to claims about energy-saving devices, particularly those that indicate they can dramatically cut your heating and cooling costs.

Ads made to look like news stories abound for "Amish style" fireplaces, a "miracle device" that supposedly can slash your heating bills. In actuality, the appliance is simply a space heater hidden inside a false fireplace with a wooden mantle.

If you were to use a space heater eight hours a day, five days a week for a month, it would cost approximately \$15. But whether it can cut your heating bill depends on several factors.

Space heaters only warm a small area. You may save some money if you turn down the thermostat (sometimes to as low as 50 degrees Fahrenheit), site the space heater in a room and then close off that room from the rest of the house.

But space heaters cannot come close to replacing energy-efficient central heating or weatherization improvements. So while it's technically possible to cut your heating bill by 50 percent using space heaters, for most people, it's impractical.

On the flip side are evaporative coolers that say they will inexpensively cool a room in your home. The inside of the unit consists of cold water and frozen ice packs,

like you would use in a lunch box. The water wets a curtain; a fan blows air through the curtain and over the ice packs, theoretically providing a cool breeze.

But do they actually work? A Consumer Reports experiment found that even in desert-like conditions, one device cooled a test room only 2 degrees over four hours.

"When it comes to saving energy, there are no magic solutions," asserts Brian Sloboda, senior program manager for energy efficiency at the Cooperative Research Network.

"Anyone promising to slash your utility bill by double digits is stretching the truth to the breaking point. Buying ENERGY STAR-rated appliances, unplugging battery chargers and sealing air leaks around windows and doors are some of the best ways to save money and energy."

There's no substitute for good old-fashioned energy efficiency measures like weather stripping around doors, caulking around windows, plugging leaks in ductwork, and regularly cleaning or replacing furnace filters.

Sources: ConsumerAffairs.com, Cooperative Research Network, Consumer Reports

Magen Howard writes for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

# Are you warming up with space heaters?

As the temperature drops, many families may use portable electric space heaters to help warm their homes. The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) warns space heaters could cause fires and injuries if not used properly.

Follow these few simple precautions:

- Read the manufacturer's instruction manual before using any space heater. Check to make sure the heater bears the mark of a certified testing organization.
- Keep space heaters at least 3 feet away from any combustible materials such as bedding, clothing, draperies, furniture and rugs.
- Keep space heaters away from areas with water. Check your manual to be sure the heater is intended to be used in locations such as bathrooms.
- Don't use space heaters in

rooms where children are unsupervised. Children may stick their fingers or other objects through the protective guards, causing burns or shock.

- Avoid using an extension cord with a space heater. If you must use one, make sure it is the right wire gauge size and type for the heater.
  - Portable heaters have hot parts that can cause sparking. Do not use them in areas where flammable liquids such as gasoline or kerosene are used or stored.
  - Space heaters are meant to supply supplemental heat. Don't use them to warm bedding, cook food, dry clothing or thaw pipes.
  - Turn off the space heater and unplug it when not in use.
- For more information on electrical safety visit the ESFI Web site: [www.electrical-safety.org](http://www.electrical-safety.org).



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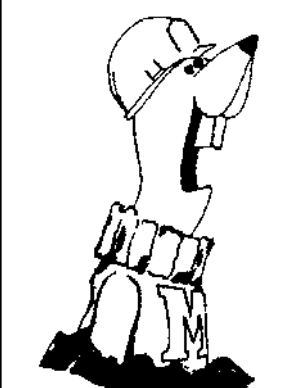


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# SNOW Is Here!

**Genuine Arctic Cat Accessories & Parts**

**FAMILY SPECIALS**  
2011 F570 LXR  
• Electric Start  
• Reverse  
• Tach/Speedo  
• Hand/Thumb Warmers

**Crossfire Units**  
2011 Crossfire 800 SnoPro Limited Edition  
Choice of 1.5" or 2.25" Tracks  
Starting at \$11,149  
**Also Available**  
Crossfire 600-2011  
Crossfire 800-2011

**UTILITY SPECIALS**  
2011 Bearcat 570LT  
• Electric Start  
• Reverse  
• 2 Passenger  
• Hand/Thumb Warmers  
• Extended Track

**Mountain Units In Stock**  
M6  
M8 S/P  
M8 SP-LTD/Mountain Models  
M8-HCR  
M8-162"

**Arcticwear Clothing**

**Sale \$6,999**

**Sale \$7,599**

**Call for Prices**

**OTHER UNITS UNDER \$10,000**

|                               |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| 2011 T570 2-UP ESR            | \$7,299 |
| 2011 M6-153" Rev              | \$9,349 |
| 2011 Crossfire 600 Rev        | \$8,999 |
| 2011 F5 LXR (1 Left)          | \$8,199 |
| 2011 SnoPro 500 (1 Left)      | \$8,249 |
| 2011 F6 SnoPro Rev            | \$9,699 |
| 2010 F8 HO Rev (1 Left)       | \$8,899 |
| 2010 F8 HO LXR (1 Left)       | \$9,599 |
| 2010 Crossfire 8 Rev (1 Left) | \$9,299 |

**OTHER UNITS UNDER \$10,000**

|                         |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 2011 Bearcat 570 XT ESR | \$8,749             |
| 2010 Bearcat 570 Rev    | Starting at \$6,099 |

**Used Inventory**

|                               |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| 2006 Crossfire 700 EFI        | \$4,899 |
| 2008 T660 Touring 4 Str. 2-Up | \$5,999 |
| 2009 F6 SnoPro Rev            | \$5,999 |
| 2009 Z-1 Turbo LXR 4 Str.     | \$8,495 |
| 2010 Bearcat 570 Rev          | \$5,699 |

**Special Purchase - New w/Warranty**

|                           |      |         |                                    |         |
|---------------------------|------|---------|------------------------------------|---------|
| 2006 Panther 660-Trail    | SOLD | \$4,999 | 2007 Z570                          | \$4,199 |
| 2006 Firecat 500 (1 Left) |      | \$5,199 | 2007 Panther 660 2-Up ESR (1 Left) | \$5,999 |
|                           |      |         | 2007 Z1 Jaguar 4 Str. ESR (1 Left) | \$7,299 |




**Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. - Saturday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

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## STEIGER® SERIES TRACTORS

### INTRODUCING THE NEXT GENERATION STEIGER SERIES TRACTORS

*The all new Case IH Steiger® and Quadtrac® Series 4WD tractors have been designed by producers for producers. Our next generation of high-horsepower tractors offer industry exclusive features in operator comfort, power & performance, maximum uptime and innovation. At Case IH, we put your needs first to help you farm the way you want.*

**INDUSTRY-LEADING STEIGER TRACTORS HANDLE LARGEST IMPLEMENTS**

- 350-600 hp (390-660 peak hp)
- Narrow Wheel Tred and Wide-Frame models available
- Most powerful tractor
- New Operator Environment
- Fuel-Savings in SCR Engine Technology & Tier 4A Compliant
- Innovation Beyond the Cab
- Ground Level Serviceability





**CASE IH AGRICULTURE**

*Steiger tractors have always stood for productivity - through ease of operation & maintenance, fuel-efficient power growth and profit per acre.*

**TITAN MACHINERY**

**Your Solutions Dealer**

**Hwy. 59 North Thief River Falls, MN**  
**[www.titanmachinery.com](http://www.titanmachinery.com)**  
**Toll Free: 1-800-888-2744**  
**Phone: 218-681-1423**

**NEW HOLLAND AGRICULTURE**

**Stop in and see Cecil or Mark for all your equipment needs**



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RETAIL RATE CHANGE EFFECTIVE APRIL, 2011 BILLING

Rate 1, General Service

|                           | Current Rate | New Rate |
|---------------------------|--------------|----------|
| Monthly Facilities Charge |              |          |
| 1.5 - 10 kVA Transformer  | \$19.00      | \$24.00  |
| 11 - 25 kVa Transformer   | \$22.00      | \$27.00  |
| 26 - 75 kVA Transformer   | \$25.00      | \$31.00  |
| First 500 kWh             | \$0.090      | \$0.096  |
| Over 500 kWh (Jan - Mar)  | \$0.080      | \$0.091  |
| Over 500 kWh (Apr - Dec)  | \$0.072      | \$0.084  |
| Multi-phase Surcharge     | \$18.00      | \$20.00  |

Rate 2, On Peak Service, over 75 kVA Transformer

|                               | Current Rate | New Rate |
|-------------------------------|--------------|----------|
| Monthly Facilities Charge     | \$44.00      | \$48.00  |
| First 35,000 kWh (Jan - Mar)  | \$0.053      | \$0.060  |
| First 35,000 kWh (Apr - Dec)  | \$0.051      | \$0.060  |
| Over 35,000 kWh (Jan - Mar)   | \$0.051      | \$0.060  |
| Over 35,000 kWh (Apr - Dec)   | \$0.049      | \$0.056  |
| Demand Chg per kW (Jan - Mar) | \$10.00      | \$13.00  |
| Demand Chg per kW (Apr - Dec) | \$6.00       | \$8.00   |

Rate 3, Seasonal Service over 75 kVA Transformer

|                                   | Current Rate | New Rate |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|----------|
| Monthly Facilities Charge per kVA | \$0.49       | \$0.49   |
| All kWh Charge (Jan - Mar)        | \$0.080      | \$0.091  |
| All kWh Charge (Apr - Dec)        | \$0.072      | \$0.084  |
| Multi-phase Surcharge             | \$18.00      | \$20.00  |

Rate 4, Interruptible Service over 25 kVA Transformer

|                              | Current Rate | New Rate |
|------------------------------|--------------|----------|
| Monthly Facilities Charge    | \$44.00      | \$48.00  |
| First 35,000 kWh (Jan - Mar) | \$0.053      | \$0.060  |
| First 35,000 kWh (Apr - Dec) | \$0.051      | \$0.060  |
| Over 35,000 kWh (Jan - Mar)  | \$0.051      | \$0.060  |
| Over 35,000 kWh (Apr - Dec)  | \$0.049      | \$0.056  |

Off-peak Heating Rates

|                                | Current Rate | New Rate |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------|
| Monthly Off-peak Equipment Chg | \$4.50       | \$5.00   |
| Short-term Control per kWh     | \$0.062      | \$0.070  |
| Long-term Control per kWh      | \$0.042      | \$0.047  |

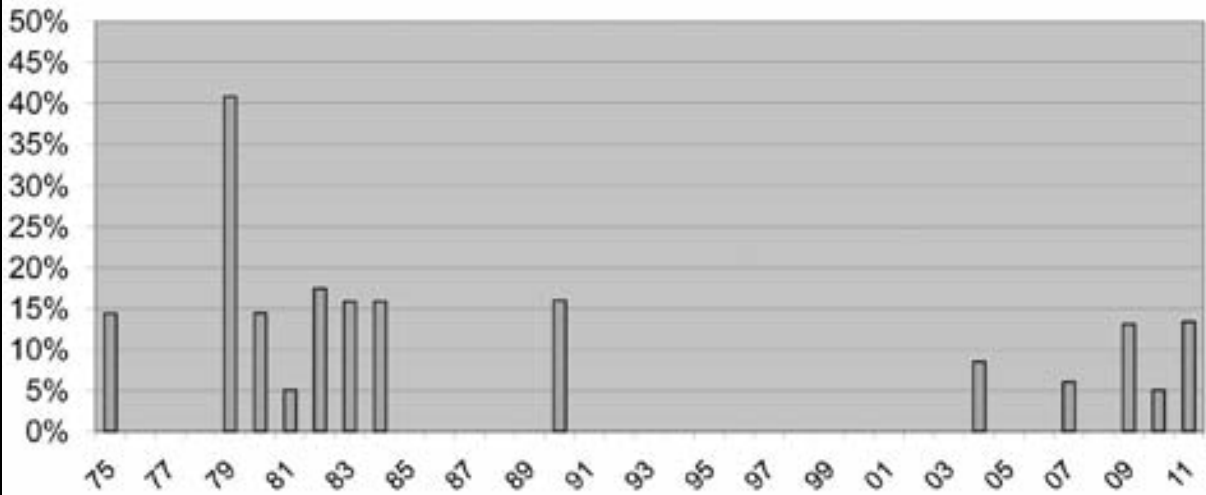
Security Lighting Service

|                          | Current Rate | New Rate |
|--------------------------|--------------|----------|
| 100 watt HPS Light Lease | \$7.00       | \$7.00   |
| 175 watt MV Light Lease  | \$8.00       | \$8.00   |

Standby Service (retain de-energized service only)

|                | Current Rate | New Rate |
|----------------|--------------|----------|
| Monthly Charge | \$10.00      | \$12.00  |

HISTORY OF RATE INCREASES - BASED ON (1,000 KWH'S)



RETAIL RATE COMPARISON

Rate 1, General Service Billing Comparison (15 kVA transformer)

| Monthly Usage | Current Rate |           | New Rate  |           |
|---------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|               | Jan - Mar    | Apr - Dec | Jan - Mar | Apr - Dec |
| 0 kWh         | \$22.00      | \$22.00   | \$27.00   | \$27.00   |
| 50 kWh        | \$26.50      | \$26.50   | \$31.80   | \$31.80   |
| 100 kWh       | \$31.00      | \$31.00   | \$36.60   | \$36.60   |
| 200 kWh       | \$40.00      | \$40.00   | \$46.20   | \$46.20   |
| 300 kWh       | \$49.00      | \$49.00   | \$55.80   | \$55.80   |
| 500 kWh       | \$67.00      | \$67.00   | \$75.00   | \$75.00   |
| 800 kWh       | \$91.00      | \$88.60   | \$102.30  | \$100.20  |
| 1000 kWh      | \$107.00     | \$103.00  | \$120.50  | \$117.00  |
| 1200 kWh      | \$123.00     | \$117.40  | \$138.70  | \$133.80  |
| 1500 kWh      | \$147.00     | \$139.00  | \$166.00  | \$159.00  |
| 2000 kWh      | \$187.00     | \$175.00  | \$211.50  | \$201.00  |
| 3000 kWh      | \$267.00     | \$247.00  | \$302.50  | \$285.00  |
| 4000 kWh      | \$347.00     | \$319.00  | \$393.50  | \$369.00  |
| 5000 kWh      | \$427.00     | \$391.00  | \$484.50  | \$453.00  |

Off-peak Electricity, Short Term Controlled (annual)

|           | Current Rate | New Rate   | Increase |
|-----------|--------------|------------|----------|
| 5000 kWh  | \$364.00     | \$410.00   | \$46.00  |
| 10000 kWh | \$674.00     | \$760.00   | \$86.00  |
| 15000 kWh | \$984.00     | \$1,110.00 | \$126.00 |
| 18000 kWh | \$1,170.00   | \$1,320.00 | \$150.00 |
| 20000 kWh | \$1,294.00   | \$1,460.00 | \$166.00 |
| 25000 kWh | \$1,604.00   | \$1,810.00 | \$206.00 |

Off-peak Electricity, Long Term Controlled (annual)

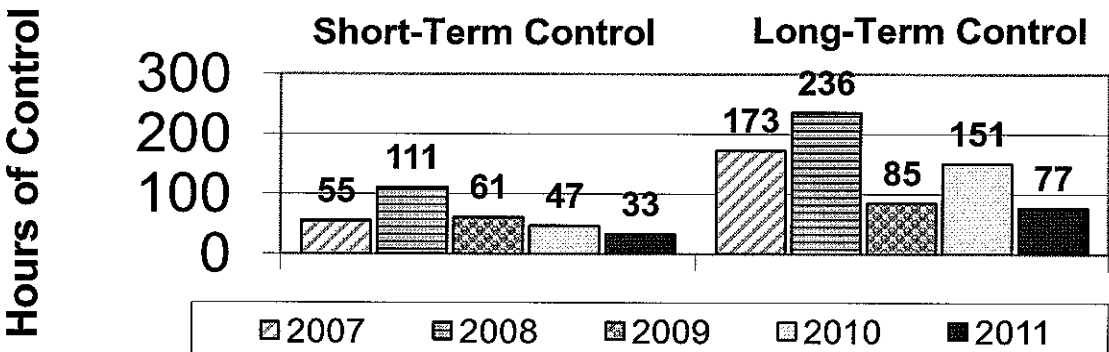
|           | Current Rate | New Rate   | Increase |
|-----------|--------------|------------|----------|
| 5000 kWh  | \$264.00     | \$295.00   | \$31.00  |
| 10000 kWh | \$474.00     | \$530.00   | \$56.00  |
| 15000 kWh | \$684.00     | \$765.00   | \$81.00  |
| 18000 kWh | \$810.00     | \$906.00   | \$96.00  |
| 20000 kWh | \$894.00     | \$1,000.00 | \$106.00 |
| 25000 kWh | \$1,104.00   | \$1,235.00 | \$131.00 |

QUICK TAKES

A look at some statistics from your Red Lake Electric Cooperative

The chart below shows the amount of control time for Red Lake Electric Cooperative's Off-Peak customers this heating season compared to the same period the past four years. Even with an increase in systemwide demand for energy, control times have been less this year and last because of renewable (Wind) generation added to Minnkota Power Cooperative's resources. In 2009, generation added at the Ashtabula, ND wind farm increased Minnkota Power Cooperative's Wind Energy resources to 358 Megawatts (MW). The Langdon and Ashtabula Wind Farms are the largest addition to Minnkota's energy sources since the Coyote coal-fired power plant came on line in 1981.

OFF-PEAK CONTROL HOURS Through January 13th



AUTO PAY OFFERED BY RLEC

Red Lake Electric Cooperative is pleased to offer you Auto Pay. Now you can have your monthly energy bill paid automatically from your checking or savings account. You can receive the Auto Pay service by completing the Auto Pay sign-up sheet and returning it to Red Lake Electric Cooperative.

The Auto Pay service is free of charge. Not only is this service free, you will eliminate the expense of writing a check, postage to mail your payment and no more late payment penalties because your bill will be paid on time, every month, for you.

Your payment will be automatically made for you on the 5th of each month. If the 5th falls on a week-

end or holiday, the payment will be made on the next business day. You will continue to receive your monthly energy bill as you have in the past, indicating the amount that will be withdrawn from your bank account. The proof of your payment will appear on your bank statement and your next month's energy bill statement.

**Continue to pay your monthly bill until you are notified on your bill that the Auto Pay has been set up for you.**

If you have any questions about the Auto Pay please call RLEC at 800-245-6068 or 218-253-2168.

AUTO PAY SIGN-UP SHEET

I authorize Red Lake Electric Cooperative (RLEC) and the bank listed below to initiate variable entries to my checking or savings account. This authorization remains in effect until I notify RLEC in writing to cancel it in such time as to allow RLEC to act on it.

RLEC ELECTRIC ACCOUNT # \_\_\_\_\_

NAME (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE # \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTION \_\_\_\_\_

CHECKING ACCOUNT # \_\_\_\_\_

SAVINGS ACCOUNT # \_\_\_\_\_

SIGN HERE TO AUTHORIZE \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this authorization form with a blank, voided check to:  
Red Lake Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 430, Red Lake Falls, MN 56750



Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.

One of the Minnkota Power Systems

Phone 218-253-2168  
Toll-free 1-800-245-6068  
Fax 218-253-2630  
After-hour outage 218-253-2200  
Office hours Monday-Friday, 8:00-4:30  
E-mail: redlake@minnkota.com  
Web site www.redlakeelectric.com

P. O. Box 430 • 412 International Drive SW • Red Lake Falls, MN 56750-0430