



*One of the Minnkota Power Systems*

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

DECEMBER 2012

## Giving kids the power to save

PowerSavers program distributes nearly 2,300 energy-savings kits to area schools

Fifth-grader teacher Eric Mickelson said the kit and presentation will fit in well with his science classes. "It's a good topic to bring up because there are some who don't know where our power comes from," Mickelson said. The utilities in the PowerSavers program contacted elementary school teach-

In this month's  
*Volts and Jolts*

**Page 6**  
Safe use of electric heating  
products adds winter warmth



### Positive feedback

Minnesota cooperatives and municipals in Minnkota's service area started PowerSavers in 2008 in an effort to meet stan-

**School takes the cue**

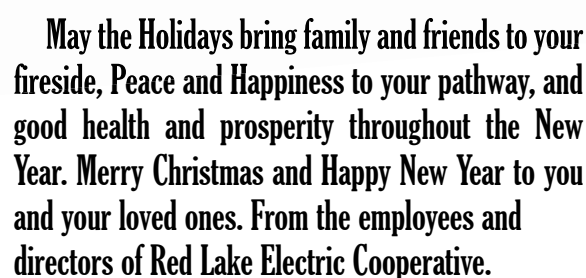
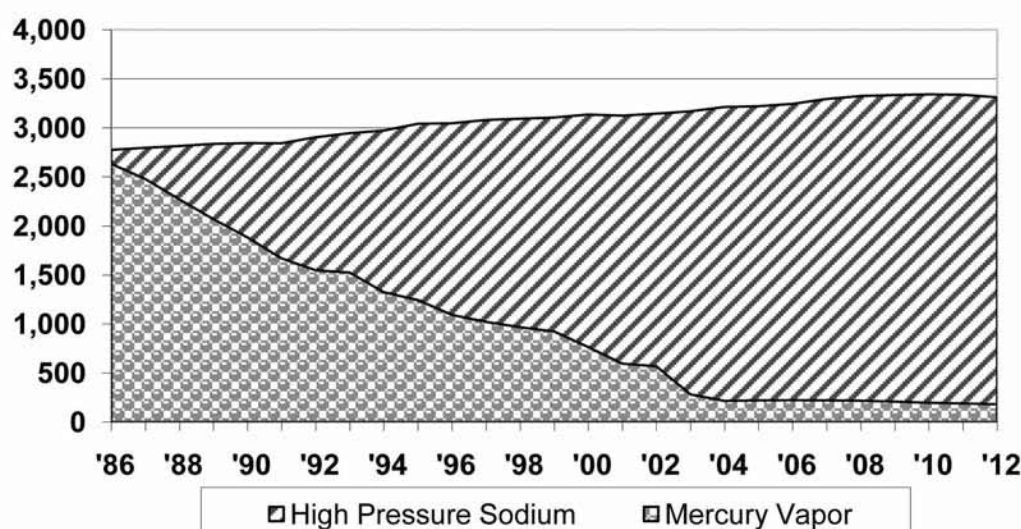
The Goodridge School isn't just leaving it up to its elementary students to save energy. The school, which is home to preschool through 12th grade, has taken a proactive approach to reducing its energy usage. Red Lake Electric partnered with the school to upgrade almost all of its lighting in 2011.

*Continued on page 8.*

## QUICK TAKES

## A look at some statistics from your Red Lake Electric Cooperative

The shorter daylight hours that come with this time of year doesn't mean you have to be in the dark. Red Lake Electric Cooperative has outdoor Security Lighting available for just pennies a night. The monthly \$8 charge includes all costs to operate and maintain the light. If you want to add lighting to your yard or work area, give us a call today. 1-800-245-6068 or 218-253-2168



Employees and directors of Red Lake Electric Cooperative were recently recognized for their years of service to the Cooperative. Pictured left to right are Warren Malwitz, custodian; Steve Linder, district 4 director; Laurie Malwitz, custodian; Bonnie Christrans, President, district 1 director; each with 10 years of service; Steve Kruse, lead lineman, 15 years; Shirley Bregier, accountant, 40 years. Not pictured is Peter Mosbeck, district 9 director, 5 years.

# Cookies and Calendars

As a small token of appreciation to our members, an open house will be held at Red Lake Electric Cooperative's headquarters December 26-28.

*Stop by for refreshments and Christmas cookies  
and pick up a 2013 calendar.*

So  
we've  
made  
some  
changes

Watch this  
space for  
tips and  
information  
from RLEC

Compare  
monthly  
usage here

## Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.

(also Red Lake Area Electric)

P.O. Box 420 • Red Lake Falls, MN 56750  
Phone: (218)253-2168 • Toll Free: (800)245-0068  
After hours: (218)253-2200  
email: redlake@redlakeco.com

00006 AV 1 0.3500 2-00006

JOHN DOE  
PO BOX 00  
ANY TOWN MN 12345

☐ Please check here and note address and phone number changes above.

Member Number	Due Date
1234	01/05/13
Account Number	Amount Due
1234567.00	197.00
STATEMENT DATE: 12/15/12	
PLEASE CHECK PAYEE'S BELOW FOR ACCURACY Home Phone: 111-222-3333 Work Phone: 111-222-3333	

Amount  
due must  
be paid or  
postmarked  
on or before  
5th to avoid  
penalty

Please return this portion with your payment. THANK YOU.

Account #	Name	Member #	Billing Date	Due Date
1234567-00	JOHN DOE	1234	12/15/12	01/05/13
Message Center				
This is your new bill statement.				
Account Activity			Previous Balance	
			97.00	
			Payment 11/05/12	
			97.00	
			Adjust Balance	
			95.00	
			Previous Balance Total	
			95.00	
			Prv Rgd Dt: 05/05/00 Cur Rgd Dt: 01/05/00	
			Metek # 112356	
			*Previous Rgd: 25337 Current Rgd: 25666	
			Estimated	
			Facilities Charge	
			610 X .09500 /kWh	
			27.00	
			Energy Charge	
			57.95	
			Minnesota Renewable Energy Surcharge	
			2.14	
			WPS 100 Sec Light	
			5.99	
			State Tax	
			.92	
			Operation Roundup	
			102.00	
			*Account Balance	
			197.00	
			Pay By 01/05/00	
Comparison				
		This Year	Last Year	
Days of Service.....		30	30	
Daily kWh Average.....		28	21	
Daily Average.....		61.5	42.8	
Energy Usage History				
kWh				
Dec 12	50			
Nov 12	50			
Oct 12	570			
Sep 12	636			
Aug 12	885			
Jul 12	645			
Jun 12	568			
May 12	647			
Apr 12	647			
Mar 12	647			
Feb 12	647			
Jan 12	647			
Dec 11	627			

Service  
dates

Red Lake Electric  
Cooperative, Inc.

One of the Minnesota Power Partners

Office Hours:  
Monday - Friday  
8:00 am to 4:30 pm  
www.redlakeelectric.com

\*\*\*Unpaid previous balance subject to a 1.5 percent per month late fee.\*\*\*

\*\*\*Check returned for any reason will be charged an additional \$15.00\*\*\*

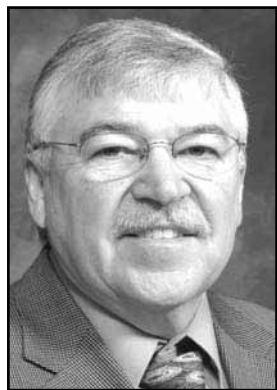
P.O. Box 420 • Red Lake Falls, MN 56750  
Phone: (218)253-2168 • Toll Free: (800)245-0068  
After hours: (218)253-2200  
email: redlake@redlakeco.com

Red Lake Electric has a new look to your electric bill. The electric bill that you received in December is a new format for us. All the information that was on your former bill is still here, just in a different format and we have added a few new things as we have highlighted in the sample.

we currently could not print the Intelligent Mail barcode to be eligible for automation discounts. Another reason is so that we will have the ability to have your bill history available on our web site.

You will not only be able to view your bills but in the future you will be able to choose to have a paperless bill and/or

make your payments online. Red Lake Electric is pleased with the changes we've made to our billing and we hope you like the changes too. Please watch your bill and the Volts and Jolts for further updates on this process. If you have questions on your electric bill please give us a call at 1-800-245-6068 or e-mail [redlake@minnkota.com](mailto:redlake@minnkota.com).



## Manager's Comments

by Roger Johanneck



## A look at 2013

While there is still plenty of work to do before we can put 2012 to rest; work on the new year has begun in the form of budgeting by those of us assigned to do that task here at your Cooperative. Budgeting for new construction, normal replacement of aged plant and the continued maintenance that is necessary to keep the electric system in reliable shape are all part of the budgeting work we're doing now to prepare for next year and beyond. Budgeting revenue to cover expenses, of course, is part of the annual planning too.

Your cooperative has done a good job, I think, of keeping up with maintaining the electric system. Poles are inspected in parts of our service area annually as well as routine line inspection done daily as crews are out doing work. Poles that do not pass the test are replaced and other problems found in our daily routines are corrected before they result in service interruptions. New tie lines are added to improve system reliability and aid in restoring power quicker when problems do arise; system upgrades are made when

growing loads require it.

There are places for improvement though, and part of our maintenance work that we hope to do better at in the new year has to do with detecting the nuisance line blinks that cause problems with digital clocks and other sensitive digital equipment. Earlier this year I wrote that we typically see line blink operations increase in the Spring and Fall when migratory bird traffic is at it's peak. Last Fall's blink problem has been solved and a new one in the area south of Thief River Falls has popped up, much to the dismay of members served by that circuit out of the Morris Owen substation, and to our line crew that has spent considerable time trying to pinpoint the cause of those blinks.

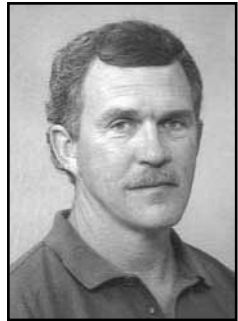
Patrolling line, checking connections, trimming trees and installing fault indicator equipment designed to help us isolate these types of problems has not yet revealed any likely culprits. We thought we had it solved when no blinks occurred for nearly three weeks and then Monday of this week, another blink occurred. We are back at

it, looking for a cause; hopefully we will get this problem cured, and soon.

Some new fault indicator equipment is in our budget for the new year; we will be seeking approval to purchase this equipment (2732003.01 Wade Harbott) soon in hopes this advanced equipment will aid in our response to detecting these nuisance blinks on the line. We appreciate your understanding and patience as we work to solve this latest line quality issue. We're committed to being a reliable source of energy for you; you have our continued pledge for that.

### Merry Christmas

On behalf of the employees and directors of your Red Lake Electric Cooperative, thank you for your patronage this past year. We appreciate the opportunity to serve you in 2012 and we look forward to serving you and the new members that will be joining us in 2013. Merry Christmas and may the new year be one full of blessings for you, your family and your Red Lake Electric Cooperative.



## Member Service Department

by Kevin Reich

## Control of off-peak electric heat systems

### Coyote generating plant off-line

As you know, last heating season was unseasonably warm which resulted in very few hours of control of off-peak electric heat. It was the fewest in a decade with long term control amounting to only 30 hours.

In last month's issue of the "Volts and Jolts" there was an article pertaining to load control stating, under normal conditions, load control for the season was estimated to be 245 hours. This would be very similar to the three heating seasons prior to 2011 - 2012.

From the time that article appeared, the Coyote generating station near Beulah, ND has gone off-line and is expected to remain so until at least mid-February. Those of you that have off-peak heating systems know that there has been load control, off and on, throughout the last four weeks, mainly due to the Coyote plant being out of service. To-date long term control has amounted to 50 hours.

I do not know the details of the outage but the generator

rotor had to be removed and shipped to North Carolina for repairs. It is estimated the down time will be at least three months.

Minnkota Power Cooperative of Grand Forks, ND, Red Lake Electric's producer and wholesaler of electricity, receives 30% of the generation output of the Coyote plant. With this generation resource not available during the heating season it is going to result in load control during times of high electrical demand. Chances are it will have an effect on the previously estimated 245 hours of control. However, when economically feasible, Minnkota Power Cooperative will purchase energy from the regional power market to avoid load control.

The three coal-fired power plants, that produce the majority of the electricity for Minnkota Power and its associated utilities, each have a scheduled outage, (6901002.01 Sidney Duane Myhre) for repairs, once every

three years. These outage are planned with actions taken in advance to help meet the electrical needs during the outages. The current Coyote plant outage was not planned and is a major one at an inopportune time.

There is another short article in this publication referring to the Coyote outage. Be rest assured, Minnkota Power and Red Lake Electric will work to meet the electrical needs at your home or business throughout the plant outage and beyond.

### Merry Christmas

Happy New Year

Our lives are generally always busy but they seem to become extra busy this time of year. As you and your loved ones gather for fellowship, friendship and celebrating remember the reason for the season and why we gather and celebrate. On behalf of my fellow employees and myself I wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

## Be ready for Santa with a safe holiday season

The most wonderful time of the year can also be the most stressful—particularly when it comes to keeping your kids safe through parties, presents, travel, and meals. Follow these tips from the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) to protect your little ones this holiday season. For more information, visit [holidaysafety.org](http://holidaysafety.org).

### Electronic gifts

About 70 percent of child-related electrical accidents occur at home when adult supervision is present, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. So make sure those new toys don't pose a danger.

Electric-powered toys and other devices can be extremely hazardous if improperly used or used without proper supervision.

An adult should supervise the use of any electrical product. Consider both the maturity of the child and the nature of the toy when deciding how much supervision is required.

Do not buy an electrical toy, or any toy, for a child too young to use it safely.

Always check the age recommendation on the package, and remember that this is a minimum age recommendation. You should still take into account your child's capabilities.

Never give any child under 10 years old a toy that must be plugged into an electrical outlet. Instead, choose toys that are battery-operated.

Make sure all electrical toys bear a fire safety label from an independent testing laboratory, such as UL (Underwriters Laboratories, Inc.).

Inspect all electrical toys periodically. Repair, replace, or discard deteriorating toys.

Ban play with electrical toys near water, and make sure they understand that water and electricity don't mix.

All electrical toys should be put away immediately after use in a dry storage area out of the reach of younger children.

### Decorating safely

Christmas, Christmas Eve, and New Year's Day lead the year for candle fires, according to ESFI. Mind your festive decorations for safety hazards:

Read manufacturer's instructions and warning labels for any decoration that will be used around young children, like electronic trains or animatronic dolls.

Keep candles, matches, and lighters out of reach, and never leave children unsupervised when candles are lit.



If you have young visitors during the holidays, be sure to invest a few dollars in outlet covers to keep curious fingers at bay.

Instead of traditional candles, try using battery-operated candles.

Cover any unused outlets on extension cords with plastic caps or electrical tape to prevent children (4415010.03 Dave Holecek) from coming in contact with a live circuit.

Place electrical cords out of the reach of small children.

Never allow children to play with lights, electrical decorations, or cords.

### Cooking

In 2009, ranges and ovens were involved in an estimated 17,300 thermal burn injuries seen in U.S. hospital emergency rooms. Of these, 36 percent of the victims were younger than 5.

Keep little kitchen helpers in check:

Never leave the kitchen when something's cooking—a fire or accident can happen in an

instant.

Keep children at least three feet away from all cooking appliances.

Never hold a child while cooking or when removing hot food from the microwave, oven, or stove.

Turn pot handles in, away from reaching hands.

Use the back burners on the cooktop whenever possible.

Hot tap water scalds can be prevented by lowering the setting on water heater thermostats to 120 degrees Fahrenheit or below and by installing anti-scald devices in water faucets.

Once your holiday meal is ready, check that the stove and oven are turned off and that other kitchen appliances are unplugged and out of reach.

Source: Electrical Safety Foundation International



When preparing meals, be sure to keep pot and pan handles turned inward, away from reaching hands.



**Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

*One of the Minnkota Power Systems*

## 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 \$60 collection fee will be charged to your account, even if you pay the collector.

To have a disconnected service reconnect, all amounts owing, a \$60 reconnection fee, and a security deposit must be paid. If the service must be reconnected after normal working hours, a \$120 reconnection fee must be paid.

### 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.

### 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.

### GENERAL SERVICE RATES

Facilities charge variable \$27 to \$35 month  
April-December . . . . . 9.5¢ Kwh  
January-March . . . . . 9.9¢ Kwh  
Multiphase users add \$22/month cost of service charge.

Standby, \$12/month (meter disconnected but the power line retained; standby is not available on services larger than 15 KVA transformer capacity).

Security light: high pressure sodium, \$8/month; mercury vapor, \$9/month; water heater flat credit, \$7/month (January-April billing); off-peak equipment charge, \$5.50/month per heat meter; off-peak energy rate: 5.5¢/kWh long-term control, 7.5¢/kWh short-term control.

## 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.



**Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

*One of the Minnkota Power Systems*

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

(USPS 663-400)

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Stacy Blawat  
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**After-Hours  
Outage Phone  
218-253-2200**

## NOTICE

Hidden within the text of the articles of this issue of the Volts & Jolts are the names and account numbers of some RLEC members. They will appear within the articles in parenthesis as such (9999999.99 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.

# Recipe Corner



### Holiday Peppermint Bark

1 pkg (12 oz) Nestle Toll House Premier White Morsels  
24 hard peppermint candies, unwrapped

Line baking sheet with wax paper. In medium microwave-safe bowl, microwave morsels uncovered, on medium-high (70 percent) power for 1 minute. Remove and stir. If pieces retain some of their original shape, microwave at additional 10- to 15-second intervals, stirring just until melted. Place peppermint candies in heavy-duty plastic bag and crush with rolling pin. Hold strainer over bowl of melted morsels and pour crushed candy into strainer. Shake to release all small candy pieces into melted morsels. Reserve larger pieces. Stir morsel-peppermint mixture to combine. Spread mixture to desired thickness on prepared baking sheet. Sprinkle with reserved candy pieces and press lightly so they stick. Let stand for about 1 hour or until firm. Break into pieces. Store in airtight container at room temperature. Yields 1 pound.

### Smoky Almond Chocolate Bark

8 ounces dark chocolate baking bar,  
broken into small pieces  
1/2 cup coarsely chopped smoke-flavored almonds  
divided  
1/8 teaspoon sea salt (preferably large crystal)

Line 8-inch baking pan with wax paper. In small microwave-safe bowl, microwave chocolate pieces uncovered on high (100 percent) power for 45 seconds. Remove and stir. If pieces retain some of their original shape, microwave at additional 10- to 15-second intervals stirring just until melted. Stir in 1/4 cup almonds. Pour into prepared baking pan and sprinkle with remaining almonds. Tap pan several times to spread chocolate and settle nuts. Sprinkle with sea salt. Refrigerate for 1 hour or until firm. Remove form pan and break into pieces. Store in airtight container at room temperature. Yields 1/2 pound.

### Fudge

1-1/2 cups sugar  
1 can (5 ounces) evaporated milk (2/3 cup)  
2 tablespoons butter or margarine  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
2 cups miniature marshmallows  
1-1/2 cups semi-sweet choc. morsels  
1/2 cup chopped pecans or walnuts optional  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Line 8- inch square baking pan with large sheet of foil allowing excess to overlap two sides of pan for easy removal of fudge. In medium heavy-duty saucepan, combine sugar, evaporated milk, butter and salt. Bring to full rolling boil over medium heat stirring constantly. Boil stirring constantly for 4 to 5 minutes. Remove from heat. Add marshmallows, chocolate morsels, nuts and vanilla extract. Stir vigorously for 1 minute or until marshmallows are melted. Pour into prepared baking pan and refrigerate for 2 hours, or until firm. Holding excess foil, lift fudge from pan; remove foil. Cut into bite-size pieces. Yields 48 pieces. Editor's Note: For Milk Chocolate Fudge, substitute 13/4 cups (11.5-ounce package) Nestle Toll House Milk Chocolate Morsels for Semi-Sweet Chocolate Morsels. For Butterscotch Fudge, substitute 1-2/3 cups (11-ounce package) Nestle Toll House Butterscotch Flavored Morsels for Semi-Sweet Chocolate Morsels.

### White Fudge

2 cups sugar  
1 cup evaporated milk  
1/2 cup butter or margarine  
8 ounces white almond bark  
1 cup miniature marshmallows  
1/2 cup flake coconut  
1/2 cup chopped English walnuts or pecans  
1 teaspoon vanilla

Butter 8-inch square pan; set aside. Butter sides of heavy 3-quart saucepan. In pan, combine sugar, evaporated milk and butter. Cook to soft ball stage (234°F). Remove from heat and add almond bark and marshmallows. Stir until melted. Add remaining ingredients. Pour into prepared pan. Cool completely, then cut into squares.

### Carmel Sweet Potatoes

5 medium sweet potatoes  
1 teaspoon salt  
3 tablespoons flour  
1 cup brown sugar  
2 tablespoons butter or margarine  
1 cup small marshmallows  
1/2 cup chopped nuts  
1 cup thin cream

Cook sweet potatoes until tender; drain, cool and peel. Cut cross-wise in 1/2 inch pieces and arrange in greased, 8-by-11 inch baking dish. Combine salt, flour and brown sugar; sprinkle over potatoes. Dot with butter, then cover with marshmallows and nuts. Pour cream over all and bake at 350°F for 45 to 50 minutes.

### Haystacks

1/2 cup evaporated milk  
1/4 cup water  
1/2 cup sugar  
2 tablespoons white corn syrup  
2 tablespoons margarine  
2 tablespoons brown sugar  
1/4 cup light molasses  
3 cups coconut

In saucepan mix together all ingredients except coconut. Cook over low heat to boiling point stirring constantly. Continue cooking and stirring until candy thermometer reaches 240°F. Remove from heat and gently stir in coconut. Drop by teaspoonfuls on waxed paper and allow to set up. Store in covered container at room temperature.

### Chocolate Chip Chocolate Clouds

12 pieces refrigerated chocolate chip cookie bar dough  
1 package (12 oz) semi-sweet chocolate morsels  
1/4 cup milk  
1 container (8 ounces) whipped topping, divided  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Heat oven to 350°F. Place 12 2-1/2 inch foil baking cups on cookie sheet. Line another cookie sheet with wax paper; set aside. Place 1 piece cookie dough in each foil cup. Bake for 12 to 14 minutes, or until just baked and light golden brown. Remove cups to wire rack to cool completely. Place 11/2 cups chocolate morsels and milk in large microwave-safe bowl. Microwave uncovered on high (100 percent) power for 1 minute. Remove and stir. If morsels retain some of their original shape, microwave at additional 10- to 15-second intervals stirring just until melted. Cool to room temperature, 20 minutes. Reserve 1/2 cup whipped topping. Combine remaining whipped topping and vanilla extract in medium bowl. Gently fold half of the whipped topping mixture into chocolate mixture. Add remaining whipped topping mixture and mix lightly. Spoon over cookie bases in muffin cups. Refrigerate for 1 hour. Meanwhile, place remaining chocolate morsels in small, heavy-duty plastic bag. Microwave on high (100 percent) power for 30 seconds; knead gently. Microwave at additional 10- to 15-second intervals kneading until melted and smooth. Cut tiny corner from bag. Onto cookie sheet lined with wax paper, squeeze chocolate into 12 11/2- to 2 inch stars. Go back and make 12 more stars, over the first 12, so the points are not lined up. Place cookie sheet in refrigerator until chocolate is firm, 5 to 10 minutes. Top each cup with a small dollop of reserved whipped topping. With tip of knife, gently remove stars from wax paper and insert, standing up, into whipped topping. Serve immediately. Yields 12 servings.

### Southern Sweet Potatoes

1-1/2 pounds sweet potatoes  
1/2 cup sugar  
A pinch of salt  
1-1/2 cups sweet cream

Peel sweet potatoes; cut into 1-inch slices and place in buttered baking dish. Sprinkle sugar and salt over them. Pour cream over top, and bake for 30 minutes in slow oven (300°F). Serve piping hot.

## Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc. Operating Report MONTHLY COMPARISON

	OCTOBER 2011	OCTOBER 2012
Total Revenue .....	\$ 925,812	\$ 938,476
Total Margins .....	\$ (4,088)	\$ (25,695)
Cost of Power .....	\$ 730,882	\$ 732,896
KWH's Purchased .....	8,738,240	9,484,800
Capital Credits Paid to Estates ..	0	\$ 4,817

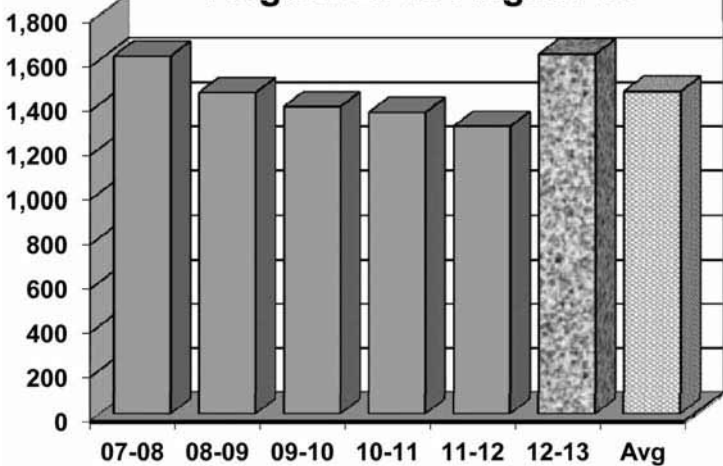
### YEAR TO DATE COMPARISON

	OCTOBER 2011	OCTOBER 2012
Total Revenue .....	\$10,406,521	\$10,709,509
Total Margins .....	\$ 138,609	\$ 590,174
Cost of Power .....	\$7,769,392	\$ 7,761,091
KWH's Purchased.....	113,549,671	103,549,015
New Service Connections .....	49	39
Customers Served.....	5,211	5,222
Capital Credits Paid to Estates ..	\$ 70,730	\$ 79,919
Miles of Line		
Overhead.....	2,324	2,323
Underground.....	239	249

## DEGREE DAYS

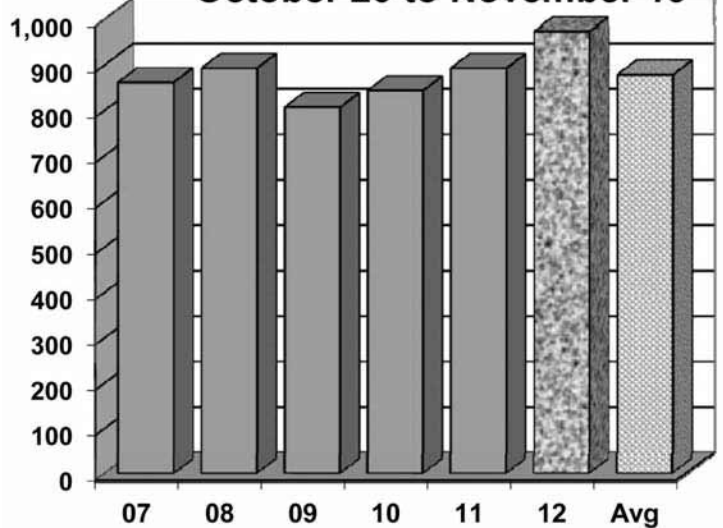
To determine degree days, you must calculate the daily mean temperature for the time period you are measuring. Degree day computation is based on the assumption that a building does not require any heat if the outside temperature averages 65 degrees during a 24-hour period. To obtain a degree day figure, 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 August 19



### DEGREE DAYS

October 20 to November 19



## From the Mail Bag

#### Dear RLEC:

A thank you to your staff and crew concerning the power outage we had in October! Prompt service and polite people to deal with! We appreciate you!

**Darren and Jenny Brein  
Newfolden**

#### Dear RLE Trust:

Thank you for the Project Round-up Grant awarded to the family Advocate Program. The generosity of the Red Lake Electric members is a wonderful gift to our community.

**April Ballard  
Family Advocate  
Thief River Falls**

#### Dear Board Members of Red Lake Electric Trust:

On behalf of the Life care Pregnancy Center, we'd like to express our heartfelt gratitude for your donation! As God commands us in the book of Deuteronomy to choose life, your gift has made it possible for women to see and choose life for their unborn child. Thank you

**Life Care  
Board of Directors  
Thief River Falls**

#### Dear RLE Operation Round Up:

Thank you for the funds for Pennington County Crime Victim Services. These funds will be used to help people who are victims of many different crimes. I know that you receive many requests and am grateful for your help in support of the Victim Services Program.

**Karla Stavnes  
Pennington County Crime  
Victim Services**

#### Dear RLEC:

Thank you for supporting Red Ribbon Week. Red Lake County Central High School SADDs are so glad you sponsored our drug free campaign! Thank you for Red Lake Electric Cooperative's Support of Red Ribbon Week October 2012. Your donation helped us teach youth in our area that "the Best Me is Drugfree!"

#### Dear RLE Trust, INC

On behalf of the Viking Fire and Rescue Department, I wanted to take a moment to sincerely thank you for the grant funds presented to us. Your generous contribution will ensure that our Volunteer Fire Department is fully compliant with all certifications so we may quickly and effectively serve our friends, neighbors, and communities when they need us the most. (4636002.01 Tyler Nelson) Thank you again for your support of this important fundraising effort. We are honored to serve those who serve us and greatly appreciate your tax-deductible contribution of \$1200.00.

**Warren Worker  
Viking Volunteer  
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#### Dear RLEC:

Thank you so much for your generous donation fo Red Lake County Central Elementary's Satisfy the Hunger Backpack program. We are currently sending home 21 bags of food each Friday to children in need. Your kindness is appreciated.

**Sincerely,  
Andrea Eskeli  
Plummer**

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## VOLTS AND JOLTS FEATURE OF THE MONTH

# A single box of lights "snowballs" into seasonal obsession

A few miles north of Holt on Minnesota Highway 32, you'll see a festive glow on the west side of the road. That's just Jim and Carol Larson's place, all decked for Christmas.

Lights of many colors, styles and sizes adorn the house, garage, shed and many trees in the yard. Several deer, Santa, a polar bear, an angel, soldiers, and a snowman sit in the front yard, ready to greet those who pass by. An illuminated nativity set, complete with a star of Bethlehem above, is one of their favorite pieces. Jim has also placed three candle shaped light decorations in the corner of the yard that holds a special meaning for him. "That's a special place. That's for three pretty special people," explains Jim. "In February of 2009, I needed an ambulance out here. Those three EMTs that got me to Thief River Falls and on a helicopter to Fargo, that's what those are for."

It all started one Christmas when he received a box of lights as a gift when the couple was living in Holt, MN, in the early 1980s. "I had one string of lights on the porch and then kept getting more and more," he says, "It just snowballed." The couple then moved to their present home near Middle River and continued the Christmas light tradition. Jim kept receiving lights for gifts over the years that he added to the collection. He also scours after Christmas sales for deals on lights. "The price of lights after Christmas was so cheap, I just had to get a bunch," he explains. They don't plan to add much more to the décor, but still purchase lights as Jim is currently in the process of switching over his light sets to LED ones, as they are much brighter and use less electricity. "We've reached a plateau and I don't think we'll add much more," he says. "I don't know what else you could add," Carol says with a chuckle.

Jim starts putting up his display in early November and turns on the lights on Thanksgiving night. Jim estimates he spends at least forty-eight hours putting up the lights each year and runs the spectacle through the twelve days of Christmas. He then checks every bulb and packs everything away so it is ready for the next year. "I've got a corner of the basement that is just lights and cords!" he says.

The Larsons have had a great response from those who enjoy the lights. Many drive into the driveway or stop at the crossing near the highway to take in the view. "There are quite a few people that drive through," says Jim, "We've received thank you cards from people we didn't even know. Evidently, people like it. That's why we keep doing it." In the past Jim has pondered not putting up the lights, but then decides that's not an option. "I've thought that I'm too old for this, but I get asked by people, 'When are you gonna start getting them up?' We'll keep going until I can't do it anymore," he says.

"I enjoy it. He does all the work and I enjoy looking at it," Carol says with a laugh. Their family also enjoys the lights, especially their seven grandchildren. One of his granddaughters saw a vehicle with Red Lake Electric Co-operative written on the side in their yard this winter and said, "Grandpa, They are going to tell you you're going to have to shut it off because you're using too much electricity!"

The inside of the Larson home is decorated as well. Almost everywhere you look you can see a decoration or two. Many snow globes sit throughout the house, as Carol received them as gifts from Jim and their three daughters. "They know that's something I like," she says. Ornaments made by their children in their younger years hang on the tree.

Both say Christmas is one of their favorite holidays. "Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year," says Jim. "We would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas."



Jim and Carol Larson



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## Bright ideas for safe lighting this season

Sparkling lights and dazzling decorations are hallmarks of the season. Make sure your holiday decorating is done with safety in mind.

Use only holiday lights that have been safety tested and have the UL label. Before decorating, check each light strand for broken sockets, frayed cords, or faulty plugs. Always be sure to unplug the lights when replacing a bulb. Don't string together more than three standard-size sets of lights or you could risk overheating the circuit.

Outdoors, use only lights, cords, animated displays and decorations rated for outdoor use. Cords should be plugged into outlets equipped with GFCI's. Use a portable GFCI if your outdoor outlets don't have them.

Take extra care not to throw strings of lights over tree branches that are near power lines and service connections.

Safe Electricity offers these additional tips for safe holiday decorating:

Place fresh-cut trees away from heat sources, such as heat registers, fireplaces, radiators, and televisions, and water frequently.

Match plugs with outlets. Don't force a 3-pronged plug into a 2-pronged outlet or extension cord, or remove the third prong.

Keep electric cords out of high-traffic areas. Do not run them through doorways, staple, nail, or tack them to the wall, or hide them under rugs or carpets.

Always unplug lights before going to bed or leaving your home.

Make sure extension cords are in good condition and are UL-approved cords rated to carry the electrical load you will connect to them.

Don't let children or pets play with light strands for electrical decorations.

"Overloaded electrical systems are a major cause of fire," warns Hall. "Flickering or dimming lights and monitors, sparks from appliances or outlets, and wall plates, plugs, or cords that are warm to the touch are warning signs that demand immediate attention."

If you spot an electrical danger, make sure to unplug the malfunctioning appliance immediately and get a replacement.

Holiday cooking and entertaining should also be undertaken

with safety in mind. More than 30% of home fires and injuries are caused by cooking, according (3803003.06 Richard Kostrewski) to the National Fire Protection Agency. Follow these tips to avoid shocks or fires:

Inspect all small appliances and electric cords to make sure they are in good repair before using. Don't use appliances with cracked or frayed cords.

Read the operating instructions of any appliance before use. When purchasing new kitchen appliances, look for UL-Listed appliances with automatic shut-off features.

Never plug more than one high-wattage appliance into a single outlet.

Keep cooking areas empty and devoid of grease.

Stay focused and attentive to baking, brewing, and simmering foods.

Make sure outlets near sinks are equipped with properly tested ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI's) to prevent shocks.

Always have a working fire extinguisher on hand, and know how to operate it.

## Thank you

Thank you to the following members and friends for your hospitality and/or assistance.

Daniel Kujava  
Doug Barth  
Dave & Vicki Ste Marie  
Van & Dede Swanson  
Alice Bluemke



## 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)

## GOPHER STATE ONE CALL

Call before digging! It's the law!  
**1-800-252-1166**

## Are all fires the same?

By Kelly Trapnell

Where there's smoke, there's fire. And while all blazes may look the same, fires should not be treated equally.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, more than 26,000 electrical home fires result in property damage, injuries, and even death every year. Remember this acronym F.I.R.E for electrical safety:

**Find the source before it starts**

Old or faulty wiring often emerges as the main culprit in causing electrical fires. In electrical fires, heat from wiring or an overloaded system can provide the strike that leads to a fire. But there are often signs before a fire even starts.

**Investigate the signs**

If you notice flickering lights, recurring trips in a circuit breaker, or a tell-tale sizzling sound around wiring and hot light switches, call a qualified electrician. These may indicate an imminent fire hazard.

**Remedy the problem**

If you have any signs of a pending fire or have worries about old wiring, contact a professional electrician. Other precautions include:

- Use correct wattage bulbs to prevent overheating fixtures.
- Avoid using damaged cords or running cords under rugs.
- Do not overload outlets or extension cords.
- Do not use appliances in wet areas.
- Routinely check appliances for signs of wear and tear or overheating.

**Exit the Building and Learn to Extinguish Properly**

If you are faced with an electrical fire, call 911 immediately and have everyone exit the building. If you feel you must face a small fire, know the proper way to approach it.

• Never use water on an electrical fire. Water conducts electricity, so it will not

• smother the fire and may lead to electrocution.

• If the circuit breaker does not trip in the area on fire, shut off the main breaker to the house if possible. Be sure to approach the breaker only if the fire is not nearby and if your hands are dry.

• Never use a Class A extinguisher on an electrical fire. Use a Class C or a multi-purpose ABC model. If there is no extinguisher available or the class of extinguisher is not known, baking soda may help smother the flames.

• Again, if the fire is not quickly extinguished, exit the building.

Even though the source and treatment of fires may differ, they produce the same results. You are no match for the force of a house fire—learn F.I.R.E. and protect yourself.

Sources: U.S. Fire Administration, Electrical Safety Foundation International, National Fire Incident Reporting System

Kelly Trapnell writes on safety and energy efficiency issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, (5914005.01 Gregory Knott) Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.



## 2013 CONTRACTOR TRAINING DATES SET

Minnkota and the associated systems will host contractor continuing education workshops again in 2013. This marks the 25th year of the successful program, which is aimed at providing area trade allies with the latest information in building and electrical practices.

Dates for the 2013 sessions are: Wednesday, Jan. 23, at the Hampton Inn, Bemidji, Minn.; Thursday, Jan. 24, at the Ramada Inn, Grand Forks, N.D. Wednesday, Jan. 30, at the Doublewood Inn, Fargo, ND; and Thursday, Jan. 31, at the Bigwood Events Center, Fergus Falls, Minn.

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

## MERRY CHRISTMAS

May your holidays be filled with the love of family and friends, the peace of cherished memories and the joy of new beginnings. Thank you for your business and the confidence you place in us.

All of us wish you a very Merry Christmas!

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1. Purchase LED Christmas plug-in (not battery operated) lights and decorations in 2012.
2. Complete this coupon and submit it to Red Lake Electric Cooperative by Dec. 31, 2012 with your original sales receipt and the LED packaging showing the LED logo and number of lights per string.
3. Strings must be 100 or fewer lights.
4. \$3/string of lights, maximum of 5 strings per customer. Rebate cannot exceed price of LED string per package.

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# Safe use of electric heating products add winter warmth

When used properly and safely, electric blankets and other heating devices can help keep you toasty during cold winter months. Here are a few safety tips for electric blankets and heating pads to keep in mind:

Inspect all cords and connections for cracks and frayed edges, which are a huge fire and injury hazard. Replace blankets or heating pads with faulty cords.

Discard your blanket or heating pad if you see dark or charred spots on the surface.

Do not put another cover on top of an electric blanket unless the safety instructions included in the packaging specifically state it's safe to do so.

Some newer models protect against overheating.

Once your electric blanket or heating pad is switched on, keep it laid flat—a folded device can cause a fire, as can a blanket that's been tucked in (which can bend wires).

Never use heated bedding while asleep—look for a model with a timer that switches off automatically.



Keep your space heater at least 3 ft. away from yourself and flammable items like blankets, drapes, and rugs. Source: U.S. Fire Administration

**Space heaters**

If you choose to use a space heater to supplement your home's heating system, some of the same rules of thumb apply, including purchasing a safety-certified model and reading the included safety instructions. More tips for space heaters:

Keep units 3 ft. away from combustible materials—such as bedding, drapes, clothes, and rugs. Space heaters also have parts that can spark, so avoid using them in areas where you store flammable liquids like kerosene and gasoline.

In general, plugging space heaters directly into a wall outlet is best. (7721002.01 Badger Town Hall) If you must use an extension cord, make sure it's the correct type and boasts the right wire gauge size for your particular space heater. Otherwise, use a wall socket that can handle the load.

Check safety instructions before using a space heater around water—some models are not intended for use in bathrooms.

Be sure children are supervised around space heaters. Curious exploration can lead to electrical shock and burns.

Finally, unplug and store the space heater in a safe place when you're not using it.

*Sources: Electrical Safety Foundation International, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission*

## Generator safety

- Generators can be dangerous or deadly to the user and to Nodak personnel working to restore your electric service. Here are some very important safety precautions to consider when using a generator.
- ✓ Never use a portable generator in an enclosed area. Generators produce a dangerously high amount of carbon monoxide very quickly. Carbon monoxide is odorless and cannot be seen and can cause serious brain damage and even death. Even if you cannot smell exhaust from the generator, you can still be exposed to carbon monoxide. If you start to feel dizzy or weak, get fresh air immediately!
  - ✓ Never try to power a house by plugging the generator into a wall outlet. This is known as backfeeding and is **Extremely** dangerous to yourself, your neighbors and cooperative personnel working to restore your power.
  - ✓ Always keep the generator dry; do not operate in wet conditions.
  - ✓ If you are connecting a generator to your home's wiring system, a double-throw disconnect switch **Must** be installed and working properly. Contact Red Lake Electric Cooperative for more information.



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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 weekend 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.

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

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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.

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

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### Giving kids the power...

*Continued from page 1.*

More than 350 lighting fixtures were replaced with the more efficient T-8 model and another 39 fixtures were retrofitted. The upgrades are estimated to save 37,274 kWh annually.

Superintendent Galen Clow said that the efficiency upgrades have (7301003.02 Curtis D. DeBoer) helped reduce the school's energy bills and

improved the lighting quality inside the building. "This is a small school, but the board has been really progressive in finding ways to save money," Clow said. "Not only does this project help us reduce our energy bills, it helps our building aesthetically and gives us brighter light."

For making a qualifying energy efficiency improvement, Red Lake Electric gave the school a \$7,054 incentive

through the PowerSavers business prescriptive program. That helps bring the project payback down to about eight years. But Clow said the expertise of the staff at his local co-op was just as valuable. "I put my trust in Red Lake Electric," Clow said. "That's what's nice about being in this area. We can always count on them for help."



Lisa Pickard, right, Minnkota Energy conservation coordinator, and Kevin Reich, back center, Red Lake Electric Cooperative manager of member services, explain how energy is produced and what can be done to use it more effectively.

## Coyote outage to impact winter power supply outlook

Minnkota Power Cooperative has informed members of the Joint System that a major outage has occurred at the Coyote Station near Beulah, N.D.

The power plant, which is partially owned by the Northern Municipal Power Agency (NOMA), is an important resource used to meet the needs of the NOMA participants and Minnkota members.

On Nov. 19, the Coyote Station experiences a significant generator failure that forced operators to take it out of service. While it isn't clear exactly what caused the issue, it appears that the repairs will take several months to complete. The generator rotor, the main rotating part,

has already been shipped to North Carolina to be fixed.

Minnkota and NOMA see the highest demand for electricity during the winter months. Both utilities are actively pursuing options to replace the 120 megawatts of lost energy by making purchases from a regional power market and through the load management program. Many members may already have noticed that load management is in use.

The first option during high demand periods is to purchase energy from the market and avoid controlling off-peak loads. However, there are times when affordable power isn't available. By using load man-

agement, Minnkota avoids making costly energy purchases that would be passed down to its members.

Each winter season, the Joint System develops a plan for the load management program. But unforeseen events such as the Coyote outage significantly impacts how those plans are carried out and the total number of control hours seen by the end-use consumer.

Minnkota and NOMA will continue to work with Coyote plant operators to ensure a safe and efficient return to service for this key resource in the region's power supply mix.

## Holiday Office Hours

Red Lake Electric Cooperative's headquarters will be closed Tuesday, December 25 and

Tuesday, January 1.

In case of an electric outage or emergency, please call the after-hour phone number at 218-253-2200.

*Have a merry Christmas and a happy New Year!*

# END OF YEAR BLOWOUT!

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\*Must trade in a 1999 or newer to qualify.  
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LT Package, 18" Chrome Wheels, 6" Tubular Running Boards, Fog Lights, Chrome Door Handles, Chrome Tow Hooks, Victory Red, Graystone Metallic, Blue Granite, Blue Topaz, Black, Deep Ruby Metallic  
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2007 Chevrolet Crew Cab LT2 Heated Leather MAX Z71 Red 6.0 V8 52,000 Mi.	\$25,900
2007 Chevrolet Avalanche 4x4 Leather Heated Seats Maroon 56,000 Mi.	\$23,900
2008 Chevrolet Crew Cab LT Z71 4x4 Silver 53,000 Mi.	\$24,900
2008 Chevrolet Avalanche LT 4x4 Silver 38,000 Mi.	\$27,900
2008 Chevrolet Silverado Crew Cab LT 4x4 Gray 59,000 Mi.	\$23,500
2009 Chevrolet Silverado Crew Cab Z71 4x4 Blue 78,000 Mi.	\$22,900
2010 Chevrolet Silverado Crew Cab Z71 4x4 Gray 52,000 Mi.	\$26,500
2011 Chevrolet Silverado Crew Cab Z71 4x4 Chrome Wheels 41,000 Mi.	\$28,000
<b>(2) 3/4 TON CREWS JUST TRADED IN</b>	
2008 3/4 Ton HD Silverado Crew Cab LT 6.0 Gas V8 4x4 Red Z71 Local Trade 52,000 Mi	\$26,500
2010 3/4 Ton HD Silverado Crew Cab LT 6.0 Gas V8 4x4 White Z71 Local Trade 36,000 Mi	\$31,500

# THIBERT'S

Red Lake Falls, Minnesota  
(800) 247-CHEV (2438)  
[www.thiberts.com](http://www.thiberts.com)

## To Our Valued Customers At The Holiday Season

It's been our pleasure serving you this past year and we look forward to serving you again soon.

YOUR SMALL TOWN, PERSONAL TOUCH,  
FULL-SERVICE LUMBER YARD.

# FALLS

Building Center

STEVE HOPPER/STAD  
1-800-480-2766  
Red Lake Falls  
Open 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m. weekdays; 7:30-noon Saturdays

## To All Our Good Neighbors At Christmas

We're displaying our holiday cheer,  
To thank everyone for stopping here  
And for your winning attitude,  
You surely have our sincere gratitude ...  
So without any fanfare or further delay  
Please accept our best wishes for a great holiday!

# AgCountry

Farm Credit Services

HEATHER DUFALT  
2611 Wheat Drive, Red Lake Falls, MN 56750  
218-253-2040

# WINTER CO-OP

BRIAN SCHAFFER  
218-289-5430  
CELLULAR

MIKE SCHAFFER  
218-289-5430  
CELLULAR

**VERY MERRY GREETINGS**

We hope your holiday is decorated with love, laughter and friendship. May the blessings of the season surround you and bring you much happiness and good fortune throughout the year.

**SCHOOL WILL BE OUT SOON FOR CHRISTMAS VACATION. WATCH FOR CHILDREN.**