



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. 45 – NO. 05

RED LAKE FALLS (RED LAKE COUNTY), MINNESOTA 56750

MARCH 2010

2009 Annual Report



Welcome

to the **72nd** Annual Meeting of the Membership of

Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Wednesday, March 31, 2010

Imperial Room, Ralph Engelstad Arena
Thief River Falls, Minnesota

| | | |
|------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 9:00 a.m. | Registration begins | |
| | Free coffee and doughnuts | |
| 10:00 a.m. | Entertainment |Vernon Rogalla |
| 10:30 a.m. | Call to order |Kelly Lundeen, President |
| | National Anthem |Becca Kruta |
| | Invocation |Henry Wieland |
| | Introductions |Kelly Lundeen |

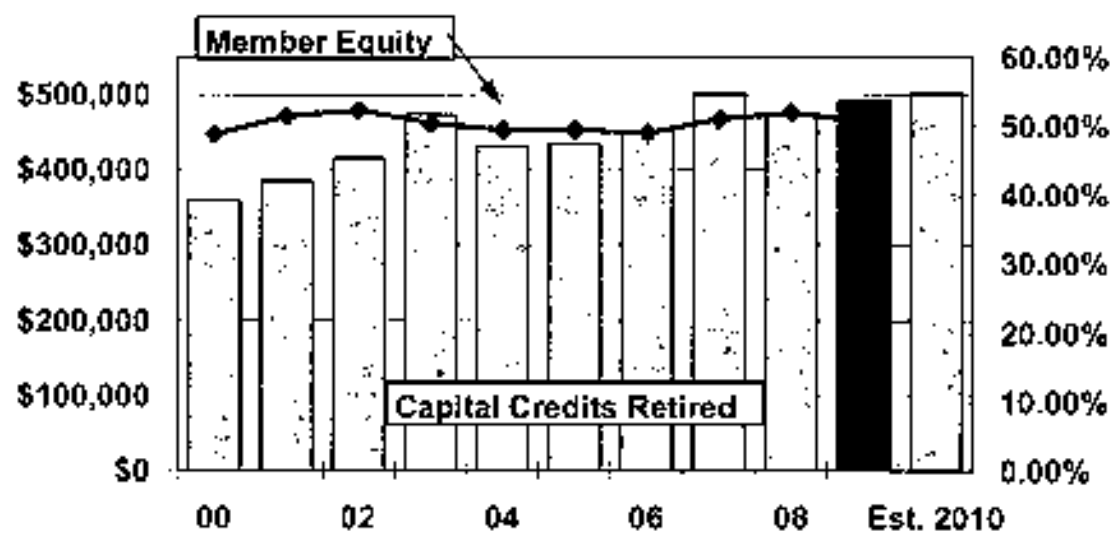
BUSINESS SESSION

| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Notice of meeting and affidavit of mailing |Henry Wieland |
| Establishment of quorum |Henry Wieland |
| Minutes of 2009 meeting |Henry Wieland |
| President's report |Kelly Lundeen |
| General manager's report |Roger Johanneck |
| Financial report |Shirley Bregier |
| Minnkota report |Dave Loer, CEO, Minnkota Power |
| Election of directors |Kelly Lundeen |
| Question and answer session | |
| Adjournment of business session | |
| Award Presentations | |
| Awarding of prizes | |
| Lunch and entertainment | |

QUICK TAKES

A look at some statistics from your Red Lake Electric Cooperative

This month, customers will experience one of the benefits of membership or ownership in their Red Lake Electric Cooperative business. Included on your March billing statement, is the General Capital Credit allocation for 2009 and retirement of member equity (Capital Credits) information for 2010. This graph shows the level of member equity or ownership in the Cooperative over the past 10 years and the amount of Capital Credits returned to members annually over the same period. Since the Cooperative began business in 1938, the Cooperative has retired \$8.6 million of Capital Credits to its members.



Meet the District 6 director candidates

Daniel Schmitz, Red Lake Falls, is a candidate for the District 6 directorship of Red Lake Electric Cooperative. A petition was filed on his behalf.

Schmitz is a life-long resident of Red Lake County, currently residing in Wylie Township with his wife Mary Lou. They have a small farm where they raise cattle and sheep. Schmitz owns Dan's Drywall and has been self-employed as a drywall contractor since 1976. Dan and Mary Lou have been married 17 years. He has been a member of Red Lake Electric for 29 years.

The Schmitzes are members of St. Joseph Church, Red Lake Falls, where Dan has served on the church council. Schmitz is a member of the Knights of Columbus (KCs), Red Lake Falls Council, where he has served as Grand Knight and deputy Grand Knight. He has also served on the district and state level for the KCs currently serving as State Squire Chairman, Diocese of Crookston, Minnesota State Council and served as family activities director. Schmitz currently serves as Faithful Navigator of the KCs Fourth Degree Assembly, Crookston. He (5733001.01 Caleb and Mary Munch) also serves as a member of the advisory committee to the Red Lake Falls watershed district.

Schmitz said he would like to serve as director of District 6 to be the voice of the people of the district. "If elected as director, I believe my responsibility would be to work with management to help members receive the most reliable electric service at the most reasonable rates possible," stated Schmitz.

"I have always received very good service from the Cooperative. The dedication of the employees goes on without question. I have prayed for the safety of the lineman as they work in unfavorable conditions."

"As a small business owner I realize a business has to be profitable to remain in business, but the customer is the most important part of the business. Serving the members of District 6 would allow me to [give back a little] to those who have helped me make a living over the past 33 years," said Schmitz



Daniel J. Schmitz

Randy Versdahl, Red Lake Falls, is the elected director candidate for District 6 of Red Lake Electric Cooperative. He was elected as candidate at the District 6 meeting held Feb. 9.

Versdahl graduated from McIntosh High School in 1975. Following high school, he attended Northland Community and Technical College in Thief River Falls graduating with an electronics degree. Versdahl has been employed with Garden Valley Telephone Company of Erskine for over 32 years. For the past 13 years he has served as facilities manager and safety director. Prior to this position, he served as facilities supervisor, district representative for the Red Lake Falls exchange and an installer/repairman.

Versdahl and his wife Kris have been residents of Gervais Township for 30 years. Kris operates a graphic design studio from their home. Versdahl's are the parents of two daughters, Kari who is married to Danny Gagner and Erica who is married to Alan Sundby, both residing in the Grand Forks area.

Versdahl's are members of Bethany Lutheran Church, Red Lake Falls. Randy is (5322002.02 Neil D. Peterson) a member of the Pathfinders Snowmobile Club having served as treasurer and trail administrator. He has served as president of the Minnesota Telcom Alliance (MTA) plant managers group. Versdahl has been an active safety committee member of MTA for 10 years. He has been awarded three safety director awards and five company awards.

"In the future, I believe there is going to be some difficult decisions to be made concerning electric energy costs," said Versahl. "I strongly believe that smart grid and smart homes be a part of the answer. My background in telecommunications would help me to address the energy issues that will be in front of us."

"I have been a member of Red Lake Electric for 30 years and if elected director, look forward to representing the Cooperative members of the Red Lake Falls and Plummer areas," stated Versdahl.



Randy Versdahl

Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc. OFFICIAL BALLOT

Members in District 6 will elect a new director candidate at the Red Lake Electric Cooperative annual meeting on Wednesday, March 31, 2010; 10:30 a.m. at the Ralph Engelstad Arena, Thief River Falls, MN. If you are unable to attend this meeting, members of District 6 can vote by mail. After placing an "X" by the name of the person you are voting for, place the ballot in a plain, sealed envelope inside of another envelope which bears your name. Mail or deliver to: Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 430, Red Lake Falls, MN 56750.

District 6 includes Cooperative members residing in the townships of Wylie, Louisville, Browns Creek, Red Lake Falls, River, Gervais, Terrebonne and Emardville all in Red Lake County.

Red Lake Electric Cooperative *Election Ballot*

Put an "X" by the name of
the person you are voting for

Daniel Schmitz

Randy Versdahl

Minutes of the annual meeting held Wednesday, March 25, 2009 at the Ralph Engelstad Arena in Thief River Falls

The 71st annual meeting of the members of Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc. was held on Wednesday, March 25th, 2009 in the Imperial Room of the Ralph Engelstad Arena in Thief River Falls. President Kelly Lundeen called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Approximately 175 members and guests were in attendance.

Lundeen thanked Vern Rogalla for the pre-meeting musical entertainment he provided. Ashley Carlson, a sophomore at Lafayette High School in Red Lake Falls, sang the national anthem. Pete Mosbeck gave an invocation, and current and former board members were introduced.

President Lundeen then called the business meeting to order. Secretary Henry Wieland then read the affidavit of mailing and quorum declaration.

Lundeen entertained a motion that the 2008 annual meeting minutes be approved as they were printed in the March *Volts and Jolts*. It was duly moved, seconded and carried to do so.

In his president's report, Kelly Lundeen said the past year of 2008 was very good in many respects. RLEC was spared any major storm related outages and that the main cause for service interruptions was due to underground cable failure. Lundeen thanked customers who had given easements to replace faulty cable with overhead conductor. Outage time per customer averaged 1.7 hours in 2008; slightly better than the previous year. Lundeen reported over \$475,000 was

paid out in capital credit retirements, and member equity was a strong 52 percent of assets. He also thanked the Cooperative's members who participated in the Operation Round Up program.

Roger Johanneck, general manager, gave his report and discussed three different topics: retail rate increase, conservation improvement program and the nationwide Our Energy, Our Future campaign. Johanneck mentioned the reason for the 13.3 percent retail rate increase that was effective with the March 2009 bills was due to the loss of the DBS revenue stream that ended in February 2008 and the 13 percent wholesale rate increase implemented by Minnkota Power Cooperative. Johanneck also mentioned that the CIP program was changing from a spending requirement to a savings requirement effective 2010. This would increase the cost to Red Lake Electric Cooperative from an annual cost of \$67,000 to over \$200,000. Johanneck then discussed the Our Energy, Our Future campaign that invited customers to start a dialogue with their elected officials regarding a proposed carbon tax or cap and trade legislation that would increase the cost of energy to all customers. Johanneck encouraged the membership to complete the postcards provided customers in their monthly bill and at the meeting and RLEC would see to it that they would get to their elected officials in Minnesota and Washington. Johanneck then showed a short video created by NRECA that

talked about the Our Energy, Our Future campaign.

Bregier next gave the 2008 Financial Report and said energy sales were at an all-time high in 2008. Revenues were \$9 million and the cost of wholesale power was \$5.9 million. She said the margin of \$783,924 was an all-time high also. Bregier reviewed various operating expenses, fixed expenses and items on the balance sheet. She said RLEC fared very well financially in 2008 and was on firm financial ground.

Dave Loer, Minnkota Power CEO, talked about power supply issues, wind generation, load control, and climate change. He said that Minnkota had just about completed a deal with Minnesota Power that would transfer Minnesota Power's share of Young II generation to Minnkota Power in exchange for the DC transmission line that extends from the Young generating plant in Center, ND to Duluth, MN. That deal is not yet complete but would hopefully be by the end of 2009. Loer mentioned that this was a good deal for both parties and was considered a win-win situation for the two G&Ts. It is unlikely given the nature of uncertainty around coal that getting a permit for a new Young III would have ever happened. Loer also talked about the successful addition of more wind energy to Minnkota's resources and that by 2010, Minnkota will generate over 30 percent of their energy from wind. Loer stated, "We need coal however, to cover our energy needs when

the wind is not blowing and that wind cannot supply all of our needs".

President Lundeen asked for a motion to accept the preceding reports and it was duly moved, seconded and carried to do so.

Election of directors then took place. Secretary Wieland verified the nominees elected at the district meetings and said there had been no nominations by petition. Lundeen then declared the following three people duly elected as directors for three-year terms: district 2, Robert Olson; district 7, Kelly Lundeen; and district 8, Robert Finstad.

Lundeen asked for any new business or questions from the audience and there was none. It was duly moved, seconded and carried to adjourn the business session of the annual meeting.

Kim Swanson, president of the Red Lake Electric Trust board, presented a \$2,000 grant check to Oliver Urdahl of the Viking Volunteer Fire Department. Urdahl thanked the members for their participation in the Operation Round Up program and said the grant would be used to provide first responder equipment for their department.

Johanneck then presented a plaque to outgoing RLE trust director Rodney Hoffman and thanked him for his six years of serving as a director on the board.

Johanneck then played a video entitled, "Unstoppable Solar Cycles." The video emphasized that the earth's climate has always changed and that man's impact on climate change is very questionable.

Kevin Reich awarded door prizes and a special attendance prize to long-term member and frequent meeting attendee Hazel Magnuson of Newfolden. Lunch was served by Black River Lutheran Church.



\$412,000 capital credit payments given in March

The Red Lake Electric Cooperative Board of Directors has approved the payment of capital credits totaling over \$411,000. This payment continues a strong tradition of equity involvement at Red Lake Electric.

The balance of capital credits assigned to members in 1992 will be paid out, as well as 73 percent of the capital credits assigned in 1993. Active members, if they received service in those years, will see a

credit adjustment on their March billing statement. Inactive members (those no longer receiving service from RLEC) will be mailed a check.

The difference between annual revenues and annual expenses (termed a margin) is assigned to members' capital credit accounts each year based on their annual billings for electric service. The Cooperative retains those capital credits for a number of years for

financial security and to reduce debt. If the (3721001.01 Wayne D. Johnson) Cooperative's financial health is good, as it is today, some of those capital credits assigned are paid out to members. At RLEC, capital credits are paid out on a "first in, first out" basis. Capital credits are also paid out in the event of the death of a member or their spouse.

VOTING DELEGATE CERTIFICATION

Members that are corporations, churches, townships, schools or other government units may vote at the annual meeting. This form designating the voting delegate must be filled out, signed by officers and presented at the annual meeting registration desk or submitted with the Red Lake Electric Cooperative mail-in ballot.

The _____ has, at an official
name of member

meeting, designated _____
name of delegate

to represent us at the 2010 Annual Meeting of the Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Attest _____
Chairman or President

Attest _____
Clerk or Secretary

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.

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



Manager's Comments

by Roger Johanneck



Annual meeting

Last month, members of Red Lake Electric Cooperative received the official notice of the Cooperative's annual meeting which was printed in the February issue of the *Volts and Jolts*. This month members will notice that we have included a copy of the Cooperative's 2009 annual report and more information about the business that we'll take care of the day of the annual meeting.

I'd like to add my personal invitation to all members to join us, if you can, at the Cooperative's annual meeting on Wednesday, March 31. Equally important to the business that we are required to take care of at our annual meeting, I think, is the chance for members to visit with the employees that are working for them and the directors that are representing them at the Cooperative.

That goes the other way too. Employees and directors like to hear about your concerns first hand or a chance to answer your questions that are often times easier to answer and explain in person. Most often though at our member meetings, it's just the chance to visit about stuff, or hear your stories.

When I think back to last year's annual meeting; we were greeted to some nasty winter weather that morning and I was debating, along with staff, whether we should go ahead with the annual meeting or cancel it. There are so many wheels put in motion to prepare for a meet-

ing such as food preparation and reserving and setting up a place to meet; it is not easy to re-schedule.

A number of school closing announcements had been made when (7110002.02 Alice Dufault c/o Jim Dufault) we decided to continue with our plans to hold the meeting. I had announcements aired over our local radio stations that our meeting was still on.

As we arrived at the Ralph Englestad Arena in Thief River Falls, I noticed William and Carl Larson, long time RLEC members and farmers from Oklee, waiting at the entrance so they could register for the meeting. When I saw those two 90+ year old men waiting at the door, I breathed a sigh of relief. I thought; if those two men travelled from Oklee and made it safely, it was the correct decision to hold the annual meeting as planned.

I won't forget seeing these two brothers waiting at the door to attend our meeting that day, as well as the stories they shared with me at the other RLEC meetings over the years.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to hear the stories from their day, what it was like to live without electricity and with the Belgian horses they so proudly raised, worked that land with and sold. Hearing them tell about their trips with their horses to show at the Minnesota State Fair and about how that experience exposed them to admiration and buyers from

around the world.

If they were still alive and living on their farm today, their example would continue to teach us a thing or two about energy conservation; they seemed to be efficient at how they worked and lived.

My only time to visit with the Larson's and most of our members is at our district and annual meetings, as is the case for many of our employees and directors. With so many options for communicating these days, getting together in person, we know isn't the most efficient way to pass on information, but it is still an important one and why we appreciate those who attend one of our meetings we hold throughout the service area each year.

In addition to trading stories with our neighbors, we'll elect three directors, hear about what is happening at your Cooperative, share a meal and give away some prizes. I hope you can join us at the Cooperative's annual meeting on March 31 in Thief River Falls.

Director Election

As you have noticed on the front page of this month's issue of the *Volts and Jolts*; members in District 6 will be voting for a director candidate to represent them on the Cooperative's board of directors. I encourage each member in district six to exercise their privilege to vote.

Even if you can't make it to this year's annual meeting, members have the option to vote by mail. I encourage you to take a few minutes to clip out the ballot from the front page of the *Volts and Jolts* and send it in as the instructions state.

Voting at the annual meeting will be take place when registration opens at 9 a.m. and end when the meeting is called to order at 10:30. If you have any questions about the voting process, please give us call.

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.

- Electrical Safety Foundation International: www.esfi.org
- Alliance to Save Energy: www.ase.org
- US Environmental Protection Agency: www.epa.gov/greenhomes
- Energy Star: www.energystar.gov
- Minnesota Safety Council: www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org
- Safe Electricity: www.safeelectricity.org
- Lighting Controls Association: www.aboutlightingcontrols.org

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

GOPHER STATE ONE CALL

Call before digging!
It's the law!

800-252-1166

WE PROUDLY PRESENT TO YOU

The Red Lake Electric Cooperative Customer Service Guarantee



It's short and simple! Red Lake Electric Cooperative employees will meet or exceed your expectations of friendly, courteous service and will meet any commitments they make to you. If your expectations of the service provided by our employees is not met, please contact me at the Red Lake Electric Cooperative office, 253-2168. You will receive \$5.00 for your inconvenience and our promise to serve you better in the future. Our employees' commitment to quality customer service makes this guarantee possible.



Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.

One of the Minnkota Power Systems

ROGER JOHANNECK
General Manager

RED LAKE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, Inc. VOLTS & JOLTS

(USPS 663-400)

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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.



Member Service Department

by Kevin Reich

Water heaters

A question we are asked on a regular basis is; should I consider a tankless water heater for my house instead of a tank-type? I generally answer this with a question, are you referring to a tankless heater for whole-house use or a point-of-use heater? If the response is whole-house use, then my answer is no.

To properly size a tankless water heater for whole-house use, one needs to know the peak flow rate or greatest demand for hot water that may occur and what the temperature rise of the water will be.

An average or typical size tankless heater needed to meet the demands of a household is 28,000 watts (28 KW). Having a heater of this wattage would require a minimum supply of 150 amps.

In nearly every case, this would require an additional or upgraded electrical service into the house along with a probable service upgrade at the yard pole. For these two reasons alone, it doesn't make for a viable option.

I think the main reason people explore (2836006.01 Mark D. Swanson) the tankless water heater option is for the sake of reducing standby losses. In my opinion no water heater can be changed out for standby loss reasons and justify or pay for the change out.

Most recently manufactured

tank-type water heaters are well insulated and most water heaters are placed within a conditioned area of the home so the standby losses are minimal. If a homeowner is going to be away from the home for any period of time, one can shut off the supply power to the water heater, therefore not keeping the tank heated in one's absence.

A point-of-use water heater may be a good choice when a small amount of hot water is needed at one location. An example would be if a half bath is added near the entry of a home. Another application for a point-of-use heater would be to serve as a booster for a bathroom or laundry room at the far end of a home away from the water heater tank.

As part of the Power Savers Conservation Improvement Program (CIP), there is an incentive to purchase an energy efficient, large capacity water heater. The water heater must have an energy factor of .91 or greater and must be 85 gallons or larger. The capacity factor can also be met by installing two water heaters in series totaling 85 gallons or more. Currently the incentive for this CIP measure is \$150. The water heater(s) must also be connected to, and controlled by, a ripple control.

Red Lake Electric does stock and offer water heaters to Cooperative members. If you have any questions about water heaters, call the Cooperative at 253-2168 or 800-245-6068.

From the Mail Bag

Dear RLEC:

A belated thank you for the beautiful glass cutting board that Donovan won at the District 6 meeting. We will put it to very good use.

Don and Mary Jean Majeres
Red Lake Falls

Dear RLEC:

Thank you for the mega flashlight I won at the District 3 meeting in Newfolden.

Milo Wendahl
Newfolden

Dear RLEC:

Thank you for drawing my name at the District 3 meeting at Newfolden for the kitchen knife.

Roy Bakke
Newfolden

Dear RLEC:

Thanks for the informative presentation given at the District 9 meeting at Black River Church. Also, thanks for the six-piece Stanley screwdriver set and the five-pound kitchen scale.

Fred and Lorraine Dallmann
Thief River Falls

RLEC Closed Good Friday

In celebration of Easter, Red Lake Electric Cooperative's headquarters will be closed Good Friday, April 2. In case of an electrical outage or emergency, call the after-hour phone number: 218-253-2200.

Have a joyous Easter celebration.



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 \$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.

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 \$17 to \$23 month
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.

Recipe corner

Zippy Pork Chili

1 boneless pork roast (3 to 4 lb.), cut into 1-inch cubes
1 medium onion, chopped
1 garlic clove, minced
2 Tbsp. vegetable oil
2 cans (15-1/2 oz. each) chili beans
2 cans (10 oz. each) diced tomatoes and green chilies, undrained
1 can (14-1/2 oz.) diced tomatoes, undrained
1 c. water
1 tsp. beef bouillon granules
Chili powder, pepper and cayenne pepper to taste
Sour cream, tortilla chips and shredded cheddar cheese, optional
In a Dutch oven, cook pork, onion and garlic in oil over medium heat until meat is browned. Add the beans, tomatoes, water, bouillon and seasonings. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 2 hours or until meat is tender. If desired, serve with sour cream, tortilla chips and cheese. Yield: 10 servings.

Creamy White Chili

1 lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
1 medium onion, chopped
1-1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
2 cans (15-1/2 oz. each) great northern beans, rinsed and drained
1 can (14-1/2 oz.) chicken broth
2 cans (4 oz. each) choppedgreen chilies
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. ground cumin
1 tsp. dried oregano
1/2 tsp. pepper
1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper
1 c. (8 oz.) sour cream
1/2 c. whipping cream
In a large saucepan, saute chicken, onion and garlic powder in oil until chicken is no longer pink. Add beans, broth, chilies and seasonings. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 30 minutes. Remove from the heat; stir in sour cream and cream. Serve immediately. Yield: 7 servings.

Ground Beef Chili

3 lb. ground beef
1 large onion, chopped
1 medium green pepper, chopped
2 celery ribs, chopped
2 cans (16 oz. each) kidney beans, rinsed and drained
1 can (29 oz.) tomato puree
1 jar (16 oz.) salsa
1 can (14-1/2 oz.) diced tomatoes, undrained
1 can (10-1/2 oz.) condensed beef broth, undiluted
1 to 2 c. water
1/4 c. chili powder
2 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
1 Tbsp. dried basil
2 tsp. ground cumin
2 tsp. steak sauce
1 tsp. garlic powder
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. coarsely ground pepper
1-1/2 tsp. browning sauce, optional
Additional chopped onion, optional
In a Dutch oven, cook beef, onion, green pepper and celery over medium heat until meat is no longer pink and vegetables are tender; drain. Stir in the beans, tomato puree, salsa, tomatoes, broth, water, seasonings and browning sauce if desired. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 30 minutes or until chili reaches desired thickness. Garnish with chopped onion if desired. Yield: 16 servings.

Pepperoni Pizza Chili

1 lb. ground beef
1 can (16 oz.) kidney beans, rinsed and drained
1 can (15 oz.) pizza sauce
1 can (14-1/2 oz.) Italian stewed tomatoes
1 can (8 oz.) tomato sauce
1-1/2 c. water
1 package (3-1/2 oz.) sliced pepperoni
1/2 c. chopped green pepper
1 tsp. pizza seasoning or Italian seasoning
1 tsp. salt
Shredded mozzarella cheese, optional
In a large saucepan, cook beef over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Stir in the beans, pizza sauce, tomatoes, tomato sauce, water, pepperoni, green pepper, pizza seasoning and salt. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 30 minutes or until chili reaches desired thickness. Garnish with cheese if desired. Yield: 8 servings.

Enchilada Casserole

1 lb. ground turkey
1-1/2 c. chopped onions
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 Tbsp. plus 1/3 c. vegetable oil, divided
1/3 c. all-purpose flour
2 Tbsp. chili powder
3/4 tsp. seasoned salt
1/8 tsp. pepper
4 c. water
12 corn tortillas (7 inch)
1-1/2 c. (6 oz.) shredded cheddar cheese
1-1/2 c. salsa
In a skillet over medium heat, cook turkey, onions and garlic in 1 Tbsp. oil until no longer pink; drain. Sprinkle with flour, chili powder, seasoned salt and pepper. Add water; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and cook for 8 to 10 minutes. In another skillet, fry tortillas in remaining oil for about 15 seconds, turning once. Drain well. Cut nine tortillas in half. Place cut edge of one tortilla against each short side of a greased 11-inch by 7-inch by 2-inch baking dish. Place cut edge of two tortillas against long sides of dish, overlapping to fit. Place a whole tortilla in center. Spoon 2 c. of meat mixture over tortillas; sprinkle with 1/2 c. cheese. Repeat layers. Top with remaining tortillas and meat sauce. Bake, uncovered, at 375 degrees for 20 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining cheese. Bake 5 to 10 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. Serve with salsa. Yield: 8 servings.

Stuffed Pork Chops

2 Tbsp. chopped celery
2 Tbsp. chopped onion
2 Tbsp. butter or margarine, divided
1/2 c. seasoned stuffing croutons
3 Tbsp. milk
1 tsp. minced fresh parsley
1/4 tsp. paprika
1/8 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. pepper
2 boneless pork loin chops (1 inch thick)
3/4 c. beef broth
1 to 2 Tbsp. cornstarch
2 Tbsp. cold water
In a skillet, saute celery and onion in 1 Tbsp. butter until tender. Transfer to a bowl. Add croutons, milk, parsley, paprika, salt and pepper. Cut a pocket in each pork chop; fill with stuffing. In a skillet, brown chops in remaining butter. Transfer to a greased 9-inch square baking dish. Pour broth into dish. Cover and bake at 350 degrees for 30 to 35 minutes or until a meat thermometer reads 160 degrees. Remove chops and keep warm. Pour the pan drippings into a saucepan; bring to a boil. Combine cornstarch and water until smooth; gradually stir into drippings. Cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Serve with the pork chops. Yield: 2 servings.

| Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc. | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| Operating Report | | | |
| MONTHLY COMPARISON | | | |
| | JANUARY 2009 | JANUARY 2010 | |
| Total Revenue | \$ 1,156,771 | \$ 1,353,948 | |
| Total Margins | \$ 222,521 | \$ 286,771 | |
| Cost of Power | \$ 675,357 | \$ 813,017 | |
| KWH's Purchased | 19,432,384 | 17,674,876 | |
| Capital Credits Paid to Estates | \$ 5,939 | \$ 8,829 | |
| YEAR TO DATE COMPARISON | | | |
| | JANUARY 2009 | JANUARY 2010 | |
| Total Revenue | \$ 1,156,771 | \$ 1,353,948 | |
| Total Margins | \$ 222,521 | \$ 286,771 | |
| Cost of Power | \$ 675,357 | \$ 813,017 | |
| KWH's Purchased | 19,432,384 | 17,674,876 | |
| New Service Connections | 0 | 0 | |
| Customers Served | 5,162 | 5,197 | |
| Capital Credits Paid to Estates | \$ 5,939 | \$ 8,829 | |
| Miles of Line | | | |
| Overhead | 2,319 | 2,325 | |
| Underground | 235 | 235 | |

Top dairy herds for January DHIA

Randy Rasmussen, supervisor of the Red Lake-Pennington DHIA, put the following herds at top 10 in the association for January.

| Name | | % in | lbs. | | lbs. | lbs. | |
|-------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|---------|---------|
| | Cows | milk | milk | test | fat | protein | protein |
| Northstar Dairy LLC 3X | 1087 | 89 | 73 | 3.7 | 2.7 | 3.2 | 2.3 |
| NW Outreach Center | 112 | 86 | 73 | 3.8 | 2.8 | 3.2 | 2.3 |
| Walter Bros. Farm | 338 | 89 | 71 | 3.6 | 2.6 | 3.1 | 2.2 |
| Wayra Dairy 3X | 268 | 87 | 70 | 3.6 | 2.5 | 2.9 | 2.0 |
| Spring Prairie Colony | 371 | 84 | 67 | 3.9 | 2.6 | 3.1 | 2.1 |
| Robert and Terri Dahlen | 55 | 84 | 67 | 3.1 | 2.1 | 3.0 | 2.0 |
| Beyer Bros. Farm | 80 | 86 | 64 | 3.5 | 2.2 | 3.1 | 2.0 |
| Amundson Dairy | 70 | 84 | 64 | 3.0 | 1.9 | 3.1 | 2.0 |
| Schafer Farms | 75 | 93 | 57 | 3.9 | 2.2 | 3.3 | 1.9 |
| CB Farms LLC | 50 | 94 | 57 | 3.7 | 2.1 | 3.1 | 1.8 |

The herd averages are affected by the number of dry cows in the herd. The amount of milk or butterfat is averaged out over all the cows. This gives the farmer a record of the earning power of the herd for the month. If too many cows are included in the herd, then the average for the month may be low, even though the cow that is milking produces a lot of milk.

Top dairy herds for February DHIA

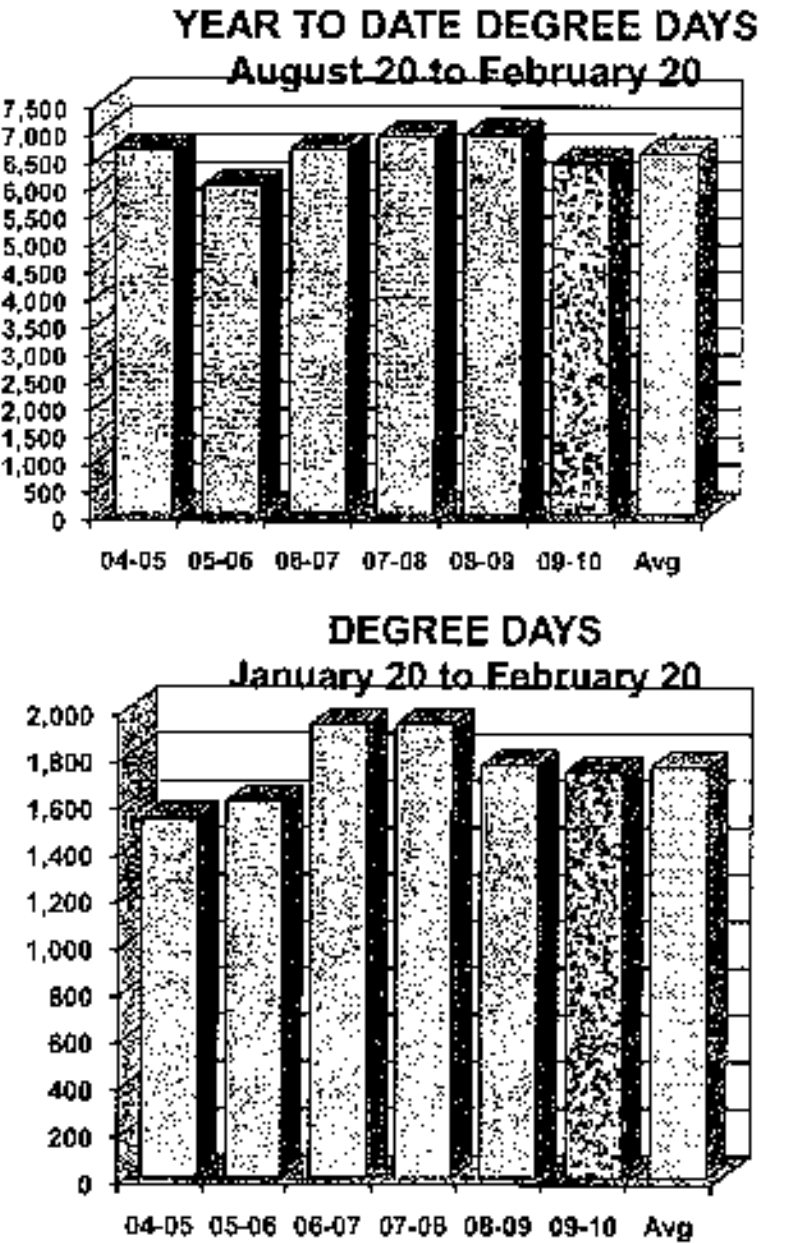
Randy Rasmussen, supervisor of the Red Lake-Pennington DHIA, put the following herds at top 10 in the association for February.

| Name | | % in | lbs. | | lbs. | lbs. | |
|-------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|---------|---------|
| | Cows | milk | milk | test | fat | protein | protein |
| NW Outreach Center | 107 | 90 | 84 | 3.4 | 2.8 | 3.1 | 2.6 |
| Northstar Dairy LLC 3X | 1082 | 89 | 73 | 3.6 | 2.6 | 3.2 | 2.3 |
| Walter Bros. Farm | 331 | 87 | 70 | 3.6 | 2.5 | 3.0 | 2.1 |
| Wayra Dairy 3X | 270 | 89 | 70 | 3.4 | 2.4 | 2.9 | 2.0 |
| Spring Prairie Colony | 371 | 87 | 69 | 3.8 | 2.6 | 3.1 | 2.1 |
| Amundson Dairy | 68 | 87 | 68 | 3.5 | 2.4 | 3.1 | 2.1 |
| Beyer Bros. Farm | 77 | 83 | 64 | 3.4 | 2.2 | 3.1 | 2.0 |
| Robert and Terri Dahlen | 56 | 84 | 63 | 3.3 | 2.1 | 3.0 | 1.9 |
| CB Farms LLC | 49 | 96 | 60 | 3.6 | 2.2 | 3.1 | 1.9 |
| Leonard and Marge Geske | 43 | 86 | 53 | 3.4 | 1.8 | 3.1 | 1.7 |

The herd averages are affected by the number of dry cows in the herd. The amount of milk or butterfat is averaged out over all the cows. This gives the farmer a record of the earning power of the herd for the month. If too many cows are included in the herd, then the average for the month may be low, even though the cow that is milking produces a lot of milk.

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.



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VOLTS AND JOLTS FEATURE OF THE MONTH

'Horses have been a big part of my life'

By Destiny Harmoning

Jerry Hestekind of rural Newfolden has spent his whole life around horses. Part of his surname even alludes to his family's history of caring for horses: Hest is Norwegian for horse.

Hestekind grew up three miles from where he lives now. It is where his father raised horses until he retired. This is where Hestekind learned the majority of the tricks of the horse trade.

Hestekind attended grade school in Holt and graduated high school in Newfolden. He recalled when Holt used to be a large town, stating it used to even have a machinery dealer. "But that was back when you could buy candy two for a penny," he said.

He is married to Janice and they raised their five children, Gregory, Robbie, Mike, Sheila and Kim in their three-bedroom trailer home, which they have relocated three times. They now get regular visits from their 12 grandchildren.

Hestekind said there are grandchildren at their house everyday. His wife watches some of the grandchildren instead of the parents sending them to day care. Most of their children still live near by and visit often. Their son Mike is even the mayor of Viking.

Hestekind said he enjoys watching his grandchildren play sports. One of his grandsons as a freshmen made the most tackles on the football team.

Hestekind also likes to hunt. Three of his granddaughters and all of his grandsons hunt. "They got to have grandpa along," he said. He enjoys watching his grandchildren hunt more than actually shooting deer himself. They have a camp where they all stay and bond during the hunting season.

Hestekind is also an avid gopher trapper. He traps the gophers and then turns them into different townships for money. One time, a few years back, he trapped 1,800 in Foldahl Township.

When his second son was getting married, Hestekind was asked to pay for the band for the wedding dance. Instead of handing over cash, he gave his son a bunch of gophers to sell to pay for the band.

Hestekind does all his gopher trapping with the help of his trusty four-wheeler. His sons made him heavy-duty metal baskets for the front and back of his four-wheeler to carry his trapping equipment.

Hestekind makes a living by oiling and repairing horse harnesses, as well as working for farmers, helping them with field work and truck and tractor driving.

Hestekind gets an order for harness oiling or repair on average about once a month.

He learned how to do oiling and repairing by watching his father. He also had to fix harnesses when he had his own horses.

Hestekind started his own business when his cousin, who, at 80 years old, owns 40 Belgian and Percheron horses, suggested he give it a try. His cousin is now one of his best customers.

It takes about three to four days to oil a harness for someone. The leather

pieces are dipped into the oil and then hung up to drip.

The exception to the process is horse collars, which can't be dipped directly into the oil. Instead, a rag soaked in oil is wiped over the leather surface of the collar.

The best season for oiling according to Hestekind is summer. He said he likes to open up the doors to his shop and let the sun in. The sun beating down on the harnesses helps the oil soak into the leather.

Hestekind recommends that horse owners now should buy nylon harnesses as they don't need to be oiled like leather and are easier to clean and maintain.

Though he doesn't do much now due to limited mobility of his right shoulder, Hestekind used to repair old horse machinery, including a binder that is on display at the Viking Museum. He has fixed up about five or six corn cultivators as well.

He used to buy a lot of machinery at auction sales, fix it up and sell it. Now it is difficult for him with his shoulder injuries and the fact that it is hard to find the parts needed to repair the machinery.

Fixing up the old machinery came naturally to Hestekind as he used to work with the equipment while raising horses with his father.

Hestekind remembered cultivating and mowing hay with the horse-drawn machinery. He didn't particularly enjoy dragging the field since it created a lot of dust.

One time he asked his father if they could ride the horses, instead of walking behind or beside them while dragging the field. He responded by saying the horses were working hard enough already without having to carry someone.

Hestekind also used to make runners for horse sleighs. Right now he is putting together a small sleigh for someone, working carefully so as not to further injure his shoulder.

Many of the parts and equipment that Hestekind has used over the years for repairing horse machinery and oiling harnesses have been passed down to him from his father.

"Horses have been a big part of my life," Hestekind said. They have also had an impact on much of his family.

One of his sons has three horses and went to school to be a farrier, a specialist in equine hoof care.

When his youngest daughter was born, a blizzard hit the day she was released from the hospital. The road to their home was blocked up with snow and made it impossible for a vehicle to travel through. Hestekind got his new daughter and his family home by rounding up the horses and sleigh to pull them through the drifts.

Though Hestekind no longer has any full-size horses, he does still have a miniature pony that his granddaughters thoroughly enjoy.

With the love of horses in his blood - and in his name - there is no doubt that Hestekind has found his true passion in life.

Jerry Hestekind

A few pieces of horse tack hang to drip after Hestekind oiled them.

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Federal Tax Credits for Energy Efficiency

2010 Summary of Tax Credits for Homeowners

| Product Category | Product Type | Tax Credit Specification | Tax Credit | Notes |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Insulation | Insulation | Typical bulk insulation products can qualify, such as batts, rolls, blow-in fibers, rigid boards, expanding spray and pour-in-place. Products that air seal (reduce air leaks) can also qualify, as long as they come with a Manufacturer's Certification Statement including: weather stripping, spray foam in a can, caulk and house wrap. | 30% of cost, up to \$1,500 ² | For insulation to qualify, its primary purpose must be to insulate (example: insulated siding does not qualify). Must be expected to last 5 years OR have a 2 year warranty |
| Windows & Doors | Exterior Windows and Skylights | U factor <= 0.30 SHGC <= 0.30 | 30% of cost, up to \$1,500 ² | Not all ENERGY STAR labeled windows and skylights qualify for tax credit. |
| | Storm Windows | Meets IECC ¹ in combination with the exterior window over which it is installed, for the applicable climate zone | 30% of cost, up to \$1,500 ² | |
| | Exterior Doors | U factor <= 0.30 SHGC <= 0.30 | 30% of cost, up to \$1,500 ² | Not all ENERGY STAR doors will qualify. |
| | Storm Doors | In combination with the exterior window/door over which it is installed: U-factor and SHGC of 0.30 or below Must meet the IECC | 30% of cost, up to \$1,500 ² | |
| Roofing | Metal Roofs, Asphalt Roofs | All ENERGY STAR qualified metal and reflective asphalt shingles | 30% of cost, up to \$1,500 ² | |
| HVAC | Central A/C | <i>Split Systems:</i> EER >=13 SEER >= 16 <i>Package systems:</i> EER >= 12 SEER >= 14 | 30% of cost, up to \$1,500 ² | For a list of qualified products, go to the Consortium for Energy Efficiency product directory, click on the Air Conditioners and in the "CEE Tier" enter "Residential Advanced Tier 3" for CAC Split Systems, and "Residential Tier 2" for CAC package systems and ASHPs. |
| | Air Source Heat Pumps | <i>Split Systems:</i> HSPF >= 8.5 EER >= 12.5 SEER >= 15 <i>Package systems:</i> HSPF >= 8 EER >= 12 SEER >= 14 | 30% of cost, up to \$1,500 ² | Note--not all ENERGY STAR products will qualify for the tax credit. ENERGY STAR Spec. (Same for CAC and ASHP): Split systems: Package systems: HSPF=8.2 HSPF=8 EER=12 EER=11 SEER=11 SEER=14 |
| | Natural Gas or Propane Furnace | AFUE >= 95 | 30% of cost, up to \$1,500 ² | For a list of qualified products, go to the Gas Appliance Manufacturing Association: |
| | Oil Furnace | AFUE >= 90 | 30% of cost, up to \$1,500 ² | Not all ENERGY STAR products will qualify for the tax credit. |
| | Gas, Propane, or Oil Hot Water Boiler | AFUE >= 90 | 30% of cost, up to \$1,500 ² | ENERGY STAR Spec: Gas Furnaces: AFUE=90 Oil Furnaces: AFUE=85 Boilers: AFUE=85 |
| | Advanced Main Air Circulating Fan | No more than 2% of furnace total energy use. | 30% of cost, up to \$1,500 ² | |

Footnotes:
1 Either the 2001 Supplement of the 2000 International Energy Conservation Code or the 2004 Supplement of the 2003 International Energy Conservation Code.

2 Subject to a \$1,500 maximum per homeowner for all improvements combined in 2009 and 2010

3 A Manufacturer's Certification is a signed statement from the manufacturer certifying that the product or component qualifies for the tax credit. The IRS encourages manufacturers to provide these Certifications on their website to facilitate identification of qualified products. Taxpayers must keep a copy of the certification statement for their records, but do not have to submit a copy with their tax return.

4 Additional information on exterior window features may be viewed at Anatomy of an Energy Efficient Window.

5 Biomass Fuel means any plant-derived fuel available on a renewable or recurring basis, including agricultural crops and trees, wood and wood waste and residues (including wood pellets), plants (including aquatic plants), grasses, residues, and fibers.

* Tax credits do not apply for the installation of insulation, windows and doors, or roofing.

| Product Category | Product Type | Tax Credit Specification | Tax Credit | Notes |
|---------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| Water Heaters | Gas, Oil, Propane Water Heater | Energy Factor >= 0.82 or a thermal efficiency of at least 90%. | 30% of cost, up to \$1,500 ² | All ENERGY STAR gas tankless water heaters will qualify. There are currently no ENERGY STAR qualified gas storage tank or gas condensing water heaters that qualify. |
| | Electric Heat Pump Water Heater | Same criteria as ENERGY STAR: Energy Factor >= 2.0 | 30% of cost, up to \$1,500 ² | All ENERGY STAR electric heat pump water heaters will qualify. |
| Biomass Stove | Biomass Stove | Stove which burns biomass fuel ⁵ to heat a home or heat water. Thermal efficiency rating of at least 75% as measured using a lower heating value. | 30% of cost, up to \$1,500 ² | |
| Geo-Thermal Heat Pump | Geo-Thermal Heat Pump | Same criteria as ENERGY STAR: Closed Loop: EER >= 14.1 COP >= 3.3 Open Loop: EER >= 16.2 COP >= 3.6 Direct Expansion: EER >= 15 COP >= 3.5 | 30% of the cost | All ENERGY STAR geothermal heat pumps qualify for the tax credit. Use IRS Form 5695 Must be placed into service before December 31, 2016. |
| Solar Energy Systems | Solar Water Heating | At least half of the energy generated by the "qualifying property" must come from the sun. Homeowners may only claim spending on the solar water heating system property, not the entire water heating system of the household. The credit is not available for expenses for swimming pools or hot tubs. The water must be used in the dwelling. The system must be certified by the Solar Rating and Certification Corporation (SRCC). | 30% of cost | All ENERGY STAR solar water heaters qualify for the tax credit. Use IRS Form 5695 Must be placed into service before December 31, 2016. |
| | Photovoltaic Systems | Photovoltaic systems must provide electricity for the residence, and must meet applicable fire and electrical code requirement. | 30% of cost | Use IRS Form 5695 Must be placed into service before December 31, 2016. |
| Small Wind Energy Systems | Residential Small Wind Turbines | Has nameplate capacity of not more than 100 kilowatts. | 30% of cost | Use IRS Form 5695 Must be placed into service before December 31, 2016. |
| Fuel Cells | Residential Fuel Cell and microturbine system | Efficiency of at least 30% and must have a capacity of at least 0.5 kW. | 30% of the cost, up to \$500 per .5 kW of power capacity | Use IRS Form 5695 Must be placed into service before December 31, 2016. |

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Energy Star-Crossed Consumers

By Megan McKay
Lots of folks are cutting down energy use, improving a home's insulation, turning lights off, or exchanging traditional lightbulbs for more efficient lighting options. So when consumers shop for new appliances, it's common to focus on finding a product with an Energy Star rating. But how do appliances get this rating? And why don't all appliances have them? The answer may surprise you.

Computers and monitors were the first products to receive an efficiency rating from Energy Star, a program launched in 1992 by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Energy. Since then, more than 60 product categories have been added, from dishwashers to windows and DVD players.

According to the program, Energy Star-rated products deliver the same or better performance as comparable models while using less energy and saving money.

"We're recognizing the top performers when it comes to energy efficiency," explains Katharine Kaplan, Energy Star program manager. She notes the initiative works closely with folks in a wide variety of areas, including industry experts, governments, non-profit organizations and utilities. "We agree on a fair way to test products. Manufacturers test products using that procedure, submit the data to us, and we say, 'These are the top performers. This is how much energy you can use to be considered a leader by Energy Star.' Generally, that means you're in the top 25 percent."

For example, qualified refrigerators must be at least 15 percent more efficient than the minimum federal efficiency standard. Energy Star-rated TVs consume 3 watts or less when switched off, compared to a standard TV, which consumes almost 6 watts on average. By pushing for the manufacturing of more efficient products, Energy Star estimates the rating system



saved businesses, organizations and consumers \$19 billion in 2008 alone.

Consumers are taking advantage of the program. A survey by the Consortium for Energy Efficiency, a group including members like the quasi-governmental Tennessee Valley Authority and Bonneville Power Administration, a federal power marketing administration in the Northwest, discovered 76 percent of American households recognize the Energy Star brand. Of these consumers, 73 percent purchased an Energy Star-labeled product within the last year.

But not all products are rated by Energy Star. The program gauges the average energy efficiency of different appliance technologies and evaluates whether there's potential for increased efficiency, generally at least 25 percent higher than minimum standards.

According to Energy Star, the most efficient electric resistance water heaters on the market have an energy factor of .95, about 5 percent more efficient than the minimum federal standard. Since there's little room for improvement, Energy Star does not have a category for the product.

"The technology doesn't qualify for the Energy Star program, not because it's not efficient, but because it's already as efficient as possible," remarks Steve Koep, a

regional manager for REEM/Marathon Water Heaters. "When it comes to purchasing an electric water heater, consumers should consider durability and energy factor, a mandatory evaluation done on all water heaters regardless of fuel source. EF takes into account fuel use, standby energy loss, and insulation under simulated actual conditions."

Last October, the New York Times revealed some manufacturers of household appliances were testing products for Energy Star certification internally instead of using independent laboratories. In response, Energy Star ramped up oversight of product ratings and by the end of the year had revoked the Energy Star label for some refrigerators while raising the bar for the efficiency expected from TVs.

Energy Star remains a driving force not just in the United States, but in other countries as well; Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Taiwan and the European Union. Federal energy efficiency tax credits for appliances and home heating and air systems typically require qualifying products to be Energy Star-rated. But if you're in the market for an appliance and have questions about which product might be best for you, feel free to contact your local electric cooperative.

To learn more about the Energy Star program, visit www.energystar.gov.

Sources: *Energy Star; REEM/Marathon Water Heaters; "Energy Star Appliances May Not All Be Efficient Audit Finds", New York Times, Oct. 19, 2009; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Air and Radiation; Climate Protection Partnerships Division; National Awareness of Energy Star for 2008; Analysis of 2008 CEE Household survey; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2009.*

How to make the most out of your next doctor's appointment

By Rachel S. Burke

No, it is not your imagination - visits with the doctor are shorter now than they used to be. Whether you are in for a routine visit or a specific diagnosis, a little bit of planning can make your appointment more productive and can save you time and money in the long run. Here are a few suggestions to consider:

- Make a list of all the medications you take, the dosage and time you take them, as well as what they are treating.
- Remember to include any over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and herbal supplements.
- If you see more than one doctor, make sure they all know what medications you take. Also, remember to note any medications that need to be refilled soon. This is especially important if you are preparing to travel; making sure you have the medications you need before you head out of town can save you an expensive trip to the doctor or pharmacy.

Before your visit, write down questions you want to ask your doctor. It may be helpful to have a family member or friend with you to take notes at your appointment. If you are being monitored for a chronic condition (i.e. diabetes, high blood pressure), note any changes in your condition since your last visit. If your medications were adjusted at your last visit, note your response to those as well.

While your doctor or nurse is talking, stop and ask questions if you do not understand something. If you are given new information about a medication or condition, ask for material you can take home. That way you will be less likely to forget what you have been told.

If you are asked a series of questions about your health and behavior, be completely honest in your answers. For example, your doctor may need to know how much alcohol you consume for a number of reasons, but it may be particularly important to have this information if you take certain medications. If you have diabetes, an honest description of your diet is essential to the management of your care. Remember, information you share with your doctor is private.

If your visit is for an acute injury or illness, provide as much information as possible. Consider these questions:

- What were you doing just before it happened? If you are having pain, describe it. Is it continuous or intermittent? How intense?
- Remember your medication list when you are seeing your doctor for an injury. If you fell and hurt your ankle, your doctor needs to know if you are taking a new medication that could cause dizziness.
- If you are experiencing pain, tell your doctor. Speaking up now will save you the expense of a late-night trip to the emergency room when the pain is too much to handle.

Ask your doctor if there are preventive screening tests you should have. For instance, if you are a woman over the age of 40, you should ask about scheduling an annual mammogram. Many serious conditions like colorectal cancer, high cholesterol, diabetes and high blood pressure can be effectively managed when diagnosed in early stages. Taking the time now to get screened could save you a lot of time and money in the future - and it might even save your life.

Rachel S. Burke, RN, is a senior advisor for Clinical Programs and Initiatives with NRECA.

- When did the problem start?

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Short circuits: old wiring could be hazardous

Residential electrical wiring changed during the 20th century as new appliances appeared on the scene and electricity evolved from a luxury to a mainstay. More appliances at home led to safety improvements and an increased number of room outlets, leaving older home wiring to play catch-up.

Although most older home electrical systems have been upgraded over the years, safety shortcomings may still exist. Since a third of American homes were built more than 50 years ago, home buyers and folks living in older homes should be aware of how wiring changed during the last century.

Electric capacity is a major concern with older wiring systems. Homeowners in the 1930s didn't use a lot of electrical appliances, except for a refrigerator, a few lights, and a radio.

An explosion of appliance purchases followed in the late 1940s and early '50s. But the arrival of air conditioning during the 1960s soon rendered many mid-century home electrical systems obsolete. More recently, residences built as little as 20 years ago might be insufficient for handling entertainment systems and personal computers.

Each year, household wiring and lighting cause an estimated average of 32,000 home fires.

On average, these fires result in 950 injuries, 220 deaths, and nearly \$674 million in property damage, according to the National Fire Protection Association.



2010 Minnesota Walleye Stamp

Fishing licenses, walleye stamp now on sale

Minnesota's fishing licenses and the state's second-ever walleye stamp are now on sale.

Anglers who purchase a license early in March can fish for 14 months, since the license does not expire until April 30, 2011.

The walleye stamp, though not necessary to catch and keep walleye, is an innovative way for anglers to voluntarily donate funds for walleye stocking. Proceeds from walleye stamp sales go directly to a special DNR account for walleye stocking activities.

"If you didn't buy a license or walleye stamp last year, now's the

time to get one," said Steve Michaels, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) license center manager.

Minnesota residents need to have a state driver's license or state identification card to purchase a license.

A walleye stamp validation costs \$5 and for \$2 more, the DNR will mail the actual collector's stamp. This year's walleye stamp was painted by Minnesota artist Tim Turenne of Richfield. It features two walleye, one of which is preparing to strike at a lure.

tection Association.

"Residential electrical systems are seldom inspected after they are installed and tend to be destroyed in house fires," explains John Drengenberg, consumer affairs manager for Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., (UL), an independent product safety testing and certification organization based in Chicago, Ill. "Homeowners should not assume all is well simply because fuses aren't blowing, circuit breakers tripping, or they're not receiving shocks or smelling burnt plastic. Inside the walls, wire insulation could be cracking and crumbling, especially if wires are drawing more current than they were designed to handle. The wood frame above plaster ceilings could also become charred by lightbulbs that are too close to the ceiling or higher in wattage than the light fixture's rating."

To avoid such hazards, consumers should understand the limits of home wiring systems. Often, this depends on when a home was built or if the electrical system was upgraded. In other cases, though, telltale signs may indicate a problem.

"Anytime you receive a shock from an electrical appliance, outlet, or wall switch in your home, it's a warning that you should talk with a qualified electrician," Drengenberg cautions. "If a fuse blows or a circuit breaker trips right after you replace or reset it, you have trouble somewhere. Flickering or dimming lights could mean loose connections, overloaded circuits, improper wiring, or arcing and sparking inside walls."

In older homes, heat means too much electrical current's being drawn through outlets. "If your receptacles or plugs are hot to the touch - you can't keep your hand on them for more than five seconds - you may have an overload," Drengenberg advises.

When too much current gets drawn, wires heat up, baking and eventually weakening the insulation. Wires with damaged, decayed, or brittle insulation can lead to shocks and fires.

Another issue associated with older home wiring systems is the number of receptacles in each room. Today's electrical code requires outlets be placed every 12 feet of running wall space, about one per wall in the average 10-by-12-foot room. Houses built before 1956 were required to have outlets placed every 20 feet, while homes built before 1935 weren't required to have wall outlets at all.

"Relying on extension cords is not the answer," indicates Drengenberg.



berg. "Extension cords are meant for temporary use only and should not be a substitute for permanent wiring."

Proper grounding, meanwhile, prevents painful or even deadly electrical shocks when electricity flows through an improper path. Every home electrical system should have some type of grounding.

Newer homes are wired with cables that include a ground wire. The ground wire allows for use of three-pronged receptacles needed to power certain appliances, particularly ones with metal shells, such as refrigerators and washing machines.

Many wiring systems installed in the 1950s and earlier used non-metallic wiring, which lacked a ground wire. Homes from this era boast only two-pronged outlets, unsuitable for many modern conveniences. Simply replacing two-pronged receptacles with three-pronged receptacles violates the National Electrical Safety Code if no ground path exists.

In some cases, older homes may feature newer wiring systems. But the era when the wiring was upgraded impacts electrical limitations. Before buying a home have someone certified in electrical work inspect the system to be safe. Visit www.inspectorseek.com for referrals.

Source: Underwriters Laboratories, Inc.

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Gazette Community Cookbook

Red Lake County residents and former residents can submit recipes in categories such as appetizers and beverages; breakfast; breads and rolls; soups, salads and sandwiches; meats and main dishes; vegetables and side dishes; camping; cakes, pies and desserts; cookies, bars and candies; this and that; and canning. All recipes are due into the Gazette by March 31.

Recipes can be dropped off at the office, mailed to PO Box 370, Red Lake Falls, MN 56750 or emailed to rlfgaz@gvtel.com.

Recipes will not be returned. The community cookbook will become available for purchase at a later date.

Final 2009 Minnesota deer harvest numbers released

A strategy to achieve deer population goals by allowing hunters to harvest fewer deer succeeded in 2009, according to final deer harvest numbers the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has released.

Hunters harvested 194,178 deer during the 2009 season. The decline reflects the fact that fewer permits were available to hunters to harvest antlerless deer because the deer population has been reduced to desired levels in many permit areas.

"We regulate deer populations by allocating antlerless deer harvest," Cornicelli said. "In 2008, one-third of deer permit areas were lottery. In 2009, half the deer permit areas were either lottery or bucks-only, so hunters could only take one deer and many did not receive an either-sex permit. Consequently, total harvest declined because thousands of antlerless deer were not included."

Firearm hunters harvested 165,428 deer while archery and muzzleloader hunters harvested 20,659 and 8,091 deer, respectively. Overall, the statewide firearm harvest was down 13 percent from 2008. Archery was down 9 percent. The muzzleloader harvest decreased 15 percent.



However buck harvest in 2009 was only 1 percent lower than in 2008 and archery and muzzleloader hunters actually took 6 percent and 11 percent more bucks in 2009, respectively.

Final population estimates will be completed after the winter ends. DNR staff re-evaluates populations relative to established goals. In many areas, hunters should expect similar bag limits and possible placement of their hunting area into the lottery designation, requiring them to apply for lottery permit.

The final deer harvest number is calculated using information provided by hunters when they register their deer. A final report, which includes more detailed harvest information, is available online at www.mndnr.gov.

Hunters should pay close attention to the hunting synopsis, which comes out in early August, to see if they need to apply for a lottery either-sex permit.

For the 2010 season, the deadline for the either-sex permit application is Thursday, Sept. 9. Archery deer hunting will begin Saturday, Sept. 18. The statewide firearms deer-hunting season opens Saturday, Nov. 6. The muzzleloader season opens Saturday, Nov. 27.

Grant funds available for renewable energy and energy conservation projects

Northwest Minnesota Foundation has received a \$40,000 grant award from the Southwest Initiative Foundation to conduct a Rural Energy Development Institute (REDI) Catalyst/Transition Grant Program in Northwest Minnesota.

NMF, in cooperation with the Northwest Regional Development Commission and the Headwaters Regional Development Commission, has developed the Northwest Minnesota Renewable Energy Coalition. This project will expand outreach and education efforts to promote new renewable energy and energy conservation projects throughout NMF's 12-county service area. The partners will also seek grant proposals for eligible projects from public entities and nonprofit community organizations. Both RDCs will provide public outreach

and education for the projects. NMF will help to organize, review and award the grants for eligible projects.

Public agencies, units of government, or private 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations which are located and/or conducting activities in the NMF service area are eligible to apply for grants. Activities that are eligible include analysis of existing renewable resources and assets; development of community-wide energy efficiency programs; feasibility studies for renewable energy projects; or, energy audits and assessments.

Grants funds may be used for typical project-related expenses such as salaries and benefits, consultant contracts, local travel, technology, or supplies and equipment essential for completing a project.

Ineligible expenses include capital campaigns, annual fund drives, endowments, construction, religious activities, past operating deficits, general operating expenses, lobbying, publicity or advertising.

Applicants should show evidence of local support, the need for funding, and plans for continuing the project, if applicable.

Grant awards for up to \$10,000 will be available by April 15.

For complete application procedures, contact Jim Steenerson, NMF, at 218-759-2057 or email jims@nwmf.org; Cam Fanfulik, NWRDC, at 218-745-6733 or e-mail cfanfulik@nwrdc.org; or Ryan Zemek, HRDC, at 218-444-4732 or e-mail rzemek@hrdc.org.

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