



NOVEMBER 2017

Volts & 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
and a portion of the lands of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa

Operation Round Up® grants total \$11,800

The Red Lake Electric Trust board met recently and awarded 18 grants to area nonprofit and community organizations totaling \$11,800. Since its inception in 1993, 838 Operation Round Up grants totaling \$512,000 have been gifted to area community organizations. The Red Lake Electric Trust receives money for grants from the Operation Round Up program administered by Red Lake Electric Cooperative. Today, 94 percent of Red Lake Electric's members voluntarily "round up" their monthly bill for the Operation Round Up program.

The following three organizations were awarded Round Up funds to help the disadvantaged.

- Violence Intervention Project of Thief River Falls: \$1,000 for its Umbrella Tree Program that provides supervised child visitations.
- TRF Area Food Shelf: \$1,000 to help purchase food for those in need.
- Red Lake County Victim Services: \$500 to help (4536002.05 Mark E. Anderson) with expenses for victims of a crime.

Five area emergency service providers were awarded grants.

- Goodridge Fire and Rescue: \$1,000 to help purchase Armor radios to improve communications.
- St. Hilaire Fire & Rescue Dept: \$650 to help purchase a water pump for all terrain vehicle.
- Newfolden Volunteer Fire Dept: \$1,000 to help replace wildland fire gear and other PPE.
- Red Lake Falls Volunteer Ambulance Service: \$1,000 to help update the radio system and purchase power/lift/power load into rig.
- Polk County Mounted Posse: \$700 to help purchase three long-range transmitter kits.



In March of 2017, the Polk County Sheriff's Office and Polk County Mounted Posse implemented Project LifeSaver LLC in rural Polk County. The primary mission of Project LifeSaver is to provide timely response to save lives and reduce potential injury for adults and children who wander due to alzheimer's, dementia, autism, down syndrome and other cognitive issues. Sgt. Randal Sondrol of the Polk County Sheriff's Office and Cpt. Elizabeth Ystenes of the Polk County Sheriff's Mounted Posse accept the grant from Bonnie Christians, ex-officio director, Red Lake Electric Trust.



One organization for aiding the general public:

- American Cancer Society RLC Chapter: \$250 to help purchase gas cards for traveling cancer patients.

Monies to benefit the youth were awarded to these five organizations:

- Early Childhood Family Education (Red Lake County): \$500 to help fund field trip for parents and preschool-aged children.
- Marshall County Social Services: \$500 to support Christmas sharing tree and food basket projects.
- Red Lake County Holiday Gift Program (Salvation Army): \$500 to purchase Christmas gifts for its annual Holiday program.
- Safety Camp (TRF & Pennington County): \$500 to help purchase safety equipment and safety camp supplies.
- Christmas for Pennington County:

\$500 to help purchase Christmas gifts for its annual Holiday program.

Two organizations that provide help and service to area seniors received the following grants:

- Middle River Seniors: \$500 to help seniors stay active and social through various activities.
- Tri-Community Living at Home/Block Nurse Program: \$700 to help provide training to approximately 60 volunteers.

Two organizations for historical merit were granted an award:

- Goodridge Area Historical Society, Inc.: \$500 to help repair siding on original Goodridge Depot.
- Polk County Historical Society: \$500 to help replace flooring on lower level of Carnegie Library.

The RLE Trust Board of Directors determines grants two times per year, in March and September. Serving on the board are; Tishara Melcher - President, Middle River; Diane Kolstoe - Vice-President, Oklee; and Julie Stennes - Secretary/Treasurer, Thief River Falls; ex-officio directors are Bonnie Christians of Crookston and Roger Johanneck of Red Lake Falls, representing Red Lake Electric Cooperative. Grant applications are available at the Red Lake Electric Cooperative office or by visiting its website at www.redlakeelectric.com. The next deadline for Operation Round Up grant applications is March 9, 2018.

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MINNESOTA STATE ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS

Northwest corner of Polk and western Marshall Counties:

Wayne Bergstrom – 701-520-9771

Pennington and eastern Marshall Counties:

Bryan Holmes – 218-686-1413

Red Lake and most of Polk Counties:

George Stage – 701-306-3511

Any time you or an electrician does wiring or other electrical work at your home or farm, Minnesota state law requires a state wiring inspector to conduct a proper inspection of the work. A rough-in inspection must be made before any wiring is covered. A final inspection is also required. Please visit www.dli.mn.gov for more information. The inspectors can be reached week-day mornings between 7:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

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



Manager's Comments

by Roger Johanneck



Your Cooperative invests in new meter technology

In the reception area of your Red Lake Electric Cooperative, mounted on a stand, is the first meter this cooperative placed in service back in 1941. I have not weighed this meter, but it is substantially larger and heavier than today's standard electronic meter. Simply put, there is a lot more iron in this old meter than today's newer versions. The cooperative's first meter is aptly labeled number "1," and has a spinning disc to tally the kilowatt-hours (kWh), a technology that dates back to 1888. Yes, that's not a typo; it's nearly 130 years this meter technology (3814003.02 LeRoy (Lee) Dusek) has been in use. Even today, three out of every four meters in use by Red Lake Electric use spinning disc technology. The remaining 25 percent of the meters do not have a spinning disc – they are electronic meters that consist of electronic chips and circuitry.

In 1996, your cooperative invested in "AMR" or *automated meter reading* technology. Over a period of four years, all meters were retrofitted with the "Turtle" brand AMR, and members were freed from having to document and mail in their meter reading each month. Meter readings were automatically sent every 27 hours via a signal transmitted over the cooperative's power lines to data collection equipment installed at each of the substations that serve our membership.

Not having to document and send in a reading each month was not the only benefit of the Turtle AMR. Meter readings were electronically transferred to each member's billing file and employees no longer had to type in meter reading data. The number of phone calls received from members

saying they must have wrote down the wrong reading because their bill was way too big, and sometimes way too small – that ended too. Other time-consuming tasks of adjusting bills that had incorrect readings or resolving high-use inquiries were a couple of more benefits of having the new AMR technology.

As we fast forward to today's metering equipment, we know that size and weight differences from the old meter to the new are not the most significant changes in metering technology. The AMR your cooperative invested in back in 1996 is soon 22 years old. Originally expected to last from 20-25 years, it has run its useful life.

AMR technology has been replaced with a new "AMI" *advanced meter infrastructure* technology. AMI allows for two-way communication and has capabilities to track a wider range of data and analytics. More information will be available for both the member and the employees. The capabilities to obtain metering data every five minutes instead of every day will be useful in a number of ways. In addition to kWh readings, voltage information, kilowatt (kW) demand, load profiling, alarms signaling a power interruption, remote connect and disconnect are some of the more common data and functions available with the new AMI.

In September your cooperative placed an order to purchase a new AMI metering system. Your cooperative has been looking at a meter and AMI upgrade for more than a year now. The impetus for investing in a new AMI came from a few different sources. The present meter/AMR system has required more maintenance to keep it functional. At some point in time, it does not remain feasible

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Report from the Office

by Shirley Bregier

Payment options

Red Lake Electric has added another option to pay your electric bill. We have partnered with Paymentus, which will allow our members to pay their electric bills using a credit or debit card. Paymentus will charge a fee of \$5.95 for a payment up to \$750. Why a fee you ask? In each transaction involving credit cards, processing fees are charged. If we didn't pass on the fee to the person who wants the convenience of using a card, we would have to add that cost to our electric rates. RLEC board of directors felt that fee should be paid by the member who wants this convenience, not absorbed by all RLEC members. The fee goes directly to Paymentus to cover processing fees and monthly fees charged by credit/debit card companies.

To make an online payment using a credit or debit card, simply go to www.redlakeelectric.com and click on the Paymentus logo. If you prefer to make a payment by phone, you can

call 1-844-379-1666. Another option we have in place is Bill4U which uses a bank account. There is no fee for using this service. The link for Bill4U is just above the Paymentus logo on our website. You can still send or bring a check or cash to our office.

Electric heat sales tax exemption

With the cold blast of wintry wind we received, I am sure everyone has turned on their heating systems. I would like to remind you that residential heat usage is exempt from Minnesota sales tax during the months of November through April. If your primary source of residential heat is electric heat (2302001.04 Clayton Hjelle) not controlled by an off-peak system, Red Lake Electric needs to have a sales tax exemption form on file. If you haven't given us a sales tax exemption form, please do so. You will find an exemption form in this issue of *Volts & Jolts*, on our website or give us a call and we will send you one.

Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas!

Manager's Comments *continued from page 2*

to keep older equipment in place. Since March 31, 2014, new AMR replacement modules were no longer available from the manufacture. Replacement parts to keep the meter system operational came from used equipment made available from other utilities who were converting to a new AMI system. The technology available with AMI today will not only provide more helpful information; it will help us do our work more efficiently. Some work and information gathering that required employee (7802001.02 Allan F. Kastner) and vehicle time will be averted because of today's AMI features.

New AMI equipment will begin

to arrive at year-end and installation will begin immediately. We have scheduled the equipment order to arrive over a two-year period and plan to install the new AMI equipment with our own personnel. We'll see how progress goes with the installation before we consider the help of an outside contractor who is experienced in meter/AMI conversions.

Thanksgiving

On behalf of all employees and directors here at Red Lake Electric Cooperative, I offer our sincere thanks for your constant business you bring to the cooperative. May you have a happy and blessed Thanksgiving.

Recipe Corner



Submit your recipes to be published in *Volts & Jolts*. Email to redlake@minnkota.com or mail to: Red Lake Electric Cooperative, PO Box 430, Red Lake Falls, MN 56750.

Sweet Potato Casserole

3 cups cooked and mashed sweet potatoes
 ¾ cup sugar
 ½ cup butter, softened
 2 eggs, lightly beaten
 1 teaspoon vanilla
 ½ cup milk

Topping

½ cup butter, melted
 1 cup brown sugar
 ½ cup flour
 1 cup chopped pecans

Boil and mash sweet potatoes. Beat in sugar, butter, eggs, vanilla and milk until smooth and creamy. Put in 9x13 greased pan.

To make topping, combine topping ingredients together in a small bowl. Stir and mix to combine. Crumble topping over sweet potatoes. Bake at 350 for 30 minutes.



As we gather with our families and friends for Thanksgiving, it is fitting we reflect on the many blessings for which we can be thankful. We all experience misfortunes, but they are few compared with the blessings bestowed on us.

May you have an enjoyable Thanksgiving!

*From your friends at
 Red Lake Electric Cooperative*



Closed Thanksgiving Day

Red Lake Electric Cooperative will be closed Thursday, Nov. 23, for Thanksgiving.

In case of an electrical outage or emergency, call the after-hours phone number, 218-253-2200.



Goodridge farmer has an impressive display of vintage gas pumps

Written by Kari Sundberg, Grygla Eagle Editor
(Taken from the October 11th, 2017, issue of the Grygla Eagle Newspaper)

Red Lake Electric member Gary Miller got his first antique gas pump about 10 years ago. Being a bit hard to come by, he has since purchased more through friends and word of mouth. What has always drawn him to these old gas pumps is the fact that his dad, Edgar Miller, has one on his farm. Edgar's grandpa John used to have a store on the century farm in the 1930s. There was the visible gas pump for people to buy gas, along with some small supplies in the well house that is still there

today. "The one at my dad's farm is all original with just a paint job," Gary explains. "I've always been interested in them. They are related to farming and tie together all of my interests."

Gary collects and restores two types of vintage gas pumps: electric and visible. After the TV show American Restoration, people are more familiar with them and collecting them, making the unique antiques pretty rare to come by.

The first visible gas pump he ever purchased came from a guy

south of Warroad. Always a project he works on in the winter, Gary has his routine down. "I find them, go and talk to them, deal, disassemble, sandblast, order parts, figure out a paint scheme, get it painted, assemble and apply decals," he says. He puts his finished products on rollers so they can be easily moved.

He has purchased pumps from the Brainerd and Roseau areas and at a couple of local auctions. With a total of six visible pumps, four are restored with the other two getting

“When I go to look at a pump, the first thing I want to know is if the glass cylinder is broke or not. I’m concerned about having that intact and how much rust is on it. Generally, I get them before they are too bad and with the primer and paint, they should last forever.”

– Gary Miller

restored this winter. He currently has five electric pumps with only one restored at the moment. One of those was from old neighbor Bernard Wells. “That one has a nice story behind it. Bernie used it for years on his farm and I bought it at his auction a couple of years ago,” recalled Gary. He plans to restore that pump this winter, already having ordered a Sinclair Dino globe for the top of it. The pump will be painted in a green and white color scheme by a friend in Salol, Minn., who has a body shop.

Gary orders all of his parts from Vic’s 66 Automobile Petroliana out of Sedro Woolley, Wash. He says you’ll never find a pump with a globe on it. “Weather, the sun and hail...and BB guns just prevent that from happening,” he laughed. All visible gas pumps had globes, but as mentioned, Gary has never found one with the original. “When I go to look at a pump, the first thing I want to know is if the glass cylinder is broke or not. I’m concerned (3424001.03 Jim Mutnansky Farm Inc.) about having that intact and how much rust is on it. Generally, I get them before they are too bad and with the primer and paint, they should last forever,” he says.

Gary enjoys the history and research of the pumps and has spent hundreds of hours reading up on them. He has an impressive display of his hobby set up in his shop on his farm in rural Goodridge.

Lined against one wall are all of his visible pumps. With decals like Sunset Gasoline, Texaco, Standard

and Super Shell, Gary likes to stick with actual gas station themes. His pumps have all the original nozzles on them, but he orders new hoses. All the other parts and pieces are original with the exception of some nuts and bolts.

The pumps could all be set up for use today. There is no power to them, but you hand pump them and it pumps the gas. The reason they are called ‘visible’ is because way back when, gas was dirty. A person could pump it up, look at it and decide if it was clean enough to use. The indicator shows how many gallons you pumped; some have a control that allowed you to put the gas back into the tank.

Back in the day, there were no streetlights so the globes that sit atop these pumps would light up. All of Gary’s restored visible pumps have lights inside and he says it’s fun to illuminate them up from time to time.

In his shop office, Gary has a set he made out of an electric gas pump and an oil luber. He got them both from an auction in St. Hilaire, Minn., but they weren’t a set and had nothing to do with each other. Now it seems like a natural fit, both restored as a Sinclair HC Gasoline set.

In addition to his vintage gas pumps, Gary also collects and restores Coca-Cola machines and vintage Rear Engine Polaris and Arctic Cat snowmobiles. He collects old gas station and farm toys, too, all of which are displayed in his shop.

“People enjoy seeing that old stuff and I enjoy talking about it,” he said.



This electric pump was purchased at Bernard Wells’ farm auction a couple of years ago. It will be restored this winter. Behind it, you can see a pump and oil luber that have been restored and made into a set.



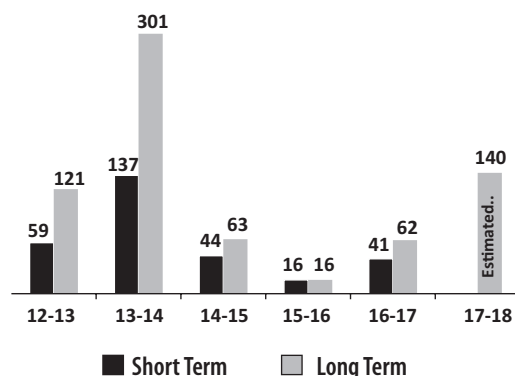
Gary Miller recently purchased this vintage visible gas pump north of Roseau and said it was neat to see something so valuable among stuff with no value. He has plans to restore it this winter.

QUICK TAKES

A look at some statistics from your
Red Lake Electric Cooperative

The chart below shows the amount of control time estimated for Red Lake Electric Cooperative's off-peak customers this heating season and a comparison of the season control over the past five years. Off-peak control hours are impacted in a number of ways, including weather, variable energy output from Minnkota's wind energy resources and energy availability in the wholesale energy market.

Off-Peak Control Hours



NOTICE OF NAMES

Hidden within the text of the articles of this issue of the *Volts & Jolts* are the names and account numbers of some Red Lake Electric Cooperative members. They will appear within the articles in parentheses as such (9999999.99 Willie Ray 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.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Purchasing electronic gifts this holiday season? Remember to purchase ENERGY STAR®-certified electronics and give the gift of energy efficiency. Visit www.energystar.gov/productfinder for a full list of efficient products.

Source: energystar.gov



Like us on Facebook at
www.facebook.com/redlakeelectric

2017 Co-op Month Winners

In observation of Co-op Month, RLEC awarded \$50 energy credits to five of its members. A random drawing was conducted and the winners are:

Michael L. Anderson, *Viking*
Arthur M. Erickson, *Thief River Falls*
Gary Johnsrud, *St. Hilaire*
Brent Olson, *Thief River Falls*
Patty Wagner, *Newfolden*

Don't want to write a check? Want to save on postage?



Red Lake Electric has a new payment option to make paying your bill easy. This service is free. Sign-up is simple. Go to www.redlakeelectric.com and click on the Bill4U icon. There is now an app for your smart-phone. Just go to your app store and download the free app. Bill4U allows you to:

- Make your payments 24 hours a day directly from your checking or savings account, eliminating the cost of the check and postage.
- Access your billing statements at any time.
- View and compare your kilowatt-hour usage.

If you have any questions or need more information, visit our website or call Red Lake Electric at 800-245-6068.

Electrical safety and conservation websites

The following is a list of websites that can provide information and education in reference to electrical safety and energy conservation. These websites are listed as links on Red Lake Electric's website at www.redlakeelectric.com.

- Electrical Safety Foundation International: www.esfi.org
- Alliance to Save Energy: www.ase.org
- U.S. 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
- U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission: www.cpsc.gov



ELECTRIC HEAT EXEMPTION

This is to certify that the primary source of heat for my residence is electricity and I am eligible for the electric heating sales tax exemption as provided by Minnesota State Law. The primary source is the source that supplies more heat than any other source for the largest period of time during the heating season.

Date _____ Account Number _____

Social Security Number _____

Signature _____

Cards of Thanks

Red Lake Electric reserves the right to edit thank you notes when being published.



Cards of Thanks to RLEC Trust

Thank you for generously donating once again to the RLC American Cancer Society. The funds will be put to good use supporting cancer patients from Red Lake County.

Red Lake County American Cancer Society Board

Thank you for your generous contribution to the Carnegie Library in Crookston. Your generous support will help us preserve and promote the history of Polk County – a place that means so much to so many.

Gerald Amiot, President, Polk County Historical Society

On behalf of the Thief River Falls and Pennington County Safety Camp Committee, I would like to thank you for the continued financial support that you have given to our safety camp.

Melissa Sletten, Events/Recreation Coordinator

CLASSIFIEDS

Members are invited to use this **FREE WANT AD** service.

If you have anything to trade or sell, just drop a card to Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Red Lake Falls, MN 56750.

For Sale

Home-raised Black Angus beef, quarter or half. No growth hormones, feed rolled barley and corn. Call after dark 218-222-3441.

FEDERAL/STATE ENERGY ASSISTANCE

If you need help paying your electric utility bill, you may qualify for state or federal fuel assistance. For complete, qualification and application information, contact your local county welfare or community/citizen's action council listed below. These organizations may also provide budget counseling.

Inter-County Community Council

Oklee, MN

*Serves East Polk, Pennington
and Red Lake Counties*

218-796-5144

Toll-free: 1-888-778-4008

Fax: 218-796-5175

Northwest Community Action

Badger, MN

Serves East Marshall County

218-528-3258

Toll-free: 1-800-568-5329

Fax: 218-528-3259

Tri-Valley Opportunity Council

Crookston, MN

*Serves West Polk,
West Marshall County*

218-281-9080

Toll-free: 1-866-264-3729

Fax: 218-281-0705

Red Lake Community Action Agency

Red Lake, MN

Serves Beltrami County

218-679-1880

Are you ready for winter?

Snow and ice are inevitable when dealing with winter storms, but being prepared can make a world of difference.

Winterize your home

Winter storms wreak havoc on your home. By winterizing your living space, you'll be prepared for extreme cold and hazardous conditions.

- Remember to maintain and inspect heating equipment and chimneys every year to ensure they're working safely and properly.
- Caulk and weatherstrip doors and windows to make the most of your heating system.
- Freezing temperatures often cause water pipes to burst. Remember to insulate pipes with insulation or newspapers and plastic. Allow faucets (4407004.30 Glen Nesland) to drip during extreme cold to avoid frozen pipes.
- Consider installing storm windows for better insulation. You can also cover windows with plastic (from the inside) to keep the cold out.
- Make sure everyone in your family knows where the home's fire extinguisher is located and how to use it properly. House fires occur more frequently during winter months, as people tend to use alternative heating methods that may not be safe.

Prepare a winter survival kit

Severe winter storms often bring heavy accumulation of ice and snow, which can lead to downed power lines and extended outages. Red Lake Electric Cooperative crews will work hard to restore power, but having a winter survival kit on hand is a smart idea.

- **Food:** Store food that does not require cooking, such as canned goods, crackers, dehydrated meats and dried fruit. Keep a large supply of water on hand. **Ready.gov** recommends five gallons per person.
- **Medication:** Be sure to refill all prescriptions in the event of a major power outage.
- **Identification:** Keep all forms of identification handy, such as driver's licenses, photo IDs and social security cards. Bank account information and insurance policies are also good to have on hand.
- **Other items:** First aid kit, blankets, flashlight, battery-powered radio and extra batteries.



**Red Lake Electric
Cooperative Inc.**

Minnkota projects lower than average control hours

In the world of load control, timing is everything.

What are the prices when you are purchasing energy from the energy market? What resources are available during peak load conditions? What are the weather impacts during the cold-weather months?

"Market price volatility is driven by weather and generator outages. These events drive the majority of the control hours," said Todd Sailer, Minnkota Power Cooperative senior manager of power supply & resource planning.

Sailer said Minnkota, your cooperative's wholesale energy supplier, estimates 140 hours of dual-heat load control this winter. This compares to the 10-year average of 180 hours and last year's total of 62 hours.

The low number of control hours in 2016-17 show that moderate temperatures and low market conditions result in lower hours of control.

"The market conditions are very similar to last year and we do expect the temperatures to be a little colder than they were last year," Sailer said.

The longest scheduled outage at the Young Station is just four days in winter 2017-18, which helped to keep this year's forecast lower than the 2016-17 projections. During outages and periods of peak electric demand, Minnkota's first option is to purchase energy (6103001.04 Pribyl Hay & Straw) from the power market.

"Right now we have some scheduled

outages for the first part of December and then again in the spring," Sailer said. "So we typically do not schedule maintenance in the January and February time frame when we're at peak conditions. That's where the unplanned or forced outages come into play."

If the timing is not right and affordable power is not available, off-peak loads are temporarily controlled. The savings are passed on to retail consumers through the lower off-peak heating rate.

"Controlling load during these periods protects consumers from the volatility of the market and prevents the need to build new power plants just to serve peak loads," Sailer said.

Minnkota has the ability to control up to 350 megawatts through its demand response system. This includes temporarily controlling storage heating systems, large-capacity water heaters, home vehicle chargers and large industrial consumers with backup generators. Millions of dollars have been saved due to the successful operation of Minnkota's load management system for nearly 40 years.

An off-peak system consists of an electric heating source as its primary component. A supplemental heating source must operate several hundred hours or more during the winter season. Sailer said members with a well-maintained backup heating system should not notice a difference in comfort level when their off-peak heating system is controlled.

*Is your off-peak
heating system*

**Ready
for winter?**

It's hard to believe winter is right around the corner. Since weather conditions and future wholesale power market prices make the amount of load control hours hard to predict, all of our off-peak members are encouraged to have a reliable, automatic dual heating system in place and ready to use.

To ensure your total comfort this winter, consider the following questions about your backup heating system:

- 1. Is the system sized to heat your entire home or business?**
- 2. Does it maintain an adequate comfort level?**
- 3. Is it reliable?**
- 4. Is it fully automatic?**

Check current fuel prices and be sure to fill your propane or fuel oil tank at the beginning of the season. Also, make sure your tank is large enough to hold an adequate supply. Remember, prices typically rise as demand increases during the heating season. Our member services department is glad to answer any off-peak questions you may have.