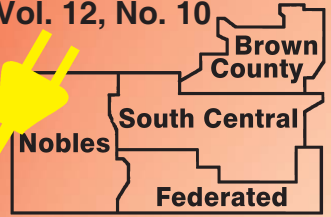


October 2008
Vol. 12, No. 10



Cooperative Alliance Partners *Connections* Connecting our co-ops & members to a progressive future



Before voting look at candidates' energy policies...Pages 2, 13



Annual Meeting is a month away — Nov. 22...Page 8

Larger rebates for 2 Energy Star appliances...Page 14

Manager's message
...Page 16

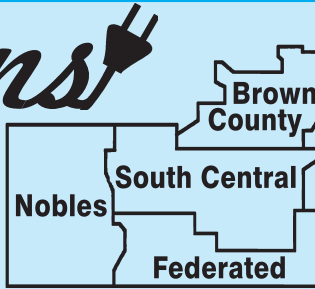
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



Cooperative Alliance Partners *Connections*

This publication focuses on CAP's members, programs and events. As this is the official member publication, member's story ideas, letters-to-the-editor and comments are welcomed.

Andrea Christoffer, CCC, Editor
Printed by the Livewire Printing Co., Jackson



Connections (USPS 010-456) is published monthly by Federated Rural Electric, 77100 US Hwy 71, Jackson, MN 56143. Subscriptions: Members \$5 a year. Nonmembers \$10 a year. Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MN and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Connections*, PO Box 69, Jackson MN 56143-0069.



Printed on recycled paper with soy ink.

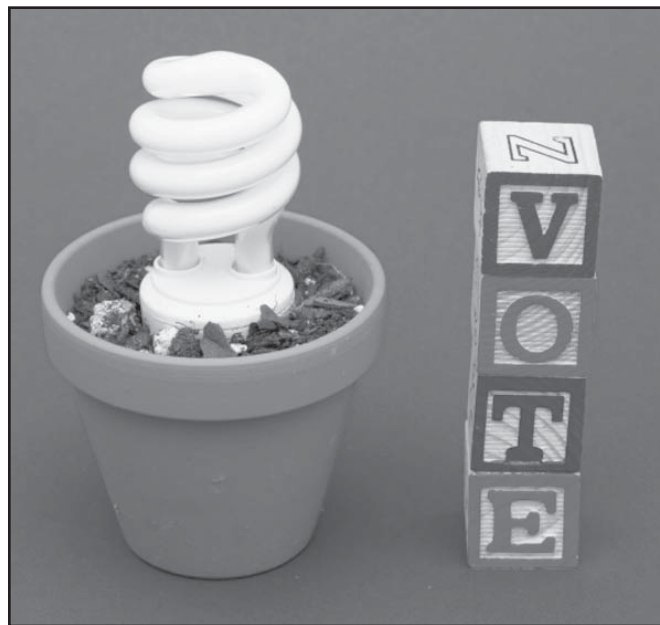


"Owned by those it serves"

Make your voice heard

Keep energy issues in mind when you head to the election booth

In less than a month Americans will head to the polls to choose the next President of the United States, members of Congress and in many cases state legislators and local officials. As electric cooperatives strive to meet our present and future energy needs, we are asking lawmakers of all stripes what they'll do to ensure that consumers continue to enjoy safe, reliable and affordable electric power. (See Page 13 to learn what the presidential candidates' stance is on energy issues.)



Plant the seed of knowledge before you cast your vote at the polls. Learn the presidential candidates' stance on energy issues and make an informed decision this November.

Today many policy makers and elected officials believe renewable energy, like wind, solar and biomass (tree trimmings, farm by-products, animal waste and landfill gas) provide the solution to addressing climate change and establishing energy independence. However, keeping the lights on and electric rates affordable means electric cooperatives will need to make use of all avail-

able generation resources. This includes renewables, nuclear power and fossil fuels like coal and natural gas that use the latest environmental technology.

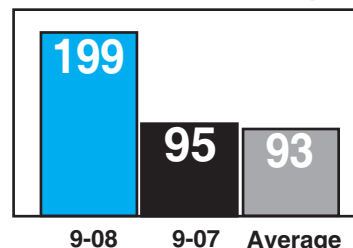
Our nation's electric system, commonly referred to as the "grid," relies on a network of power plants, transmission lines and distribution facilities woven together in an intricate web to provide us with electricity. When a piece of this puzzle doesn't fit or goes missing, brown-outs and blackouts can occur — as many folks in the Northeast remember from August 2003 or those

in the West recall twice during the summer of 1996. Over the next 22 years demand for electricity is predicted to increase 30 percent. Our country has used up the excess power capacity it once had available. That means we will need to build new power plants at a time when — *Continued on Page 12*

Cover Connections

Soon it's time to vote for president. These elections will shape the future of your electric bill due to their policies and legislation. Take a moment to learn their positions by reading the chart on Page 13. You can act now by going to the national co-op's website: www.ourenergy.coop to send a quick e-mail to D.C. ➡

Weather affects your electric bill



This chart compares the heating degree days for Sept. '08, Sept. '07 and the 63-year average for your monthly electric bill. ➡

Brown County REA member of the month

Vintage items and more are in bloom at The Blooming Thistle

Most people consider a thistle a weed, but when the plant is in bloom its purple flowers make the prickly plant pretty. Lisa Berle, Sleepy Eye, hopes to do the same thing at her country store, The Blooming Thistle. Visitors can find a wide range of crafts and once prickly items made pretty.

“I have a passion for everything old and like to recreate and fix things,” Berle said. She moved to the area in 1982 and taught aerobics at the local fitness center, cleaned and decorated homes, helped plan weddings and more. “Everything I did enabled me to be a mom to my six children first and foremost,” Berle said. “As they grew up and moved away, the Blooming Thistle started to grow.”

The seed of the Blooming Thistle sprouted from a prickly old granary. “My passion for old things includes old buildings,” Berle explained. “I looked at the granary on our farm and realized it could be something more. With the help of my husband, Dave, we started remodeling it. This included incorporating rescued doors and stairway railings from St. Mary’s Church and School in New Ulm into our designs. We gave each of the granary’s areas unique schemes. For example, we painted one section of the floor to look like brick. The design is subtle, but it sets a mood. I enjoy creating atmospheres. For the Blooming Thistle I wanted to create an atmosphere that incorporated all of the senses and was a bit whimsical. The reason for this is because the name of the store comes from a fairy tale written by



Lisa Berle owns and operates The Blooming Thistle, a vintage antique/craft store outside of Sleepy Eye. The store has been in bloom for three years now.

Hans Christian Anderson called, *What Happened To The Thistle*.”

What happened to Berle’s Blooming Thistle is that it opened in 2005. Berle’s goal was to create a store that carried an eclectic range of products. “Vintage items are my favorite,” Berle said. “The Blooming Thistle carries a wide range of antiques, farm primitives, vintage collectibles and old things refurbished to have a new purpose. We also offer floral arrangements, greenery, quilts and other linens, garden art, junk planters, candles, china, dishes, pottery and more.” Berle finds most of her items at auctions, sales, flea markets and sometimes through private individuals. “Once in awhile I’ll even pick up things that someone else threw away,” Berle said. “I call it dumpster diving and it really embarrasses my kids,” she joked. “But the hands-on work of taking something old and beat up and making it useful again makes me happy.”

Interesting, old and unique items aren’t the only thing — *Continued on Page 11*

What's the payback for some common energy-efficiency improvements?

Energy Efficiency Improvement	Installed Cost	Annual Operating Cost	Annual Energy Savings	Payback (Years)
1970s Ranch with LP Furnace	n/a	\$3,800	n/a	n/a
Ground Source Heat Pump (COP=5)	\$16,000	\$520	\$3,280	4.8
Air Source Heat Pump (HSPF = 8.5)	\$6,000	\$1,200	\$2,600	2.3
3-kW Wind Generator	\$12,000	\$0	\$700*	17.1
Energy Star Windows	\$15,000	\$0	\$500	30
Standard Windows	\$11,000	\$0	\$400	27.5
Programmable Thermostat	\$150	\$0	\$300	0.5
Temperature Setback of 3°F	n/a	n/a	\$220	Immediate
Caulking and Weatherization	\$200	\$0	\$300	0.7

*Assumes average 0.33 operating capacity (1 kW year round)

So you want to stretch your energy dollar, but which energy-efficient improvement is most cost-effective?

Should I install a heat pump? New windows? A small wind turbine? The assumptions for the above table of energy-efficient improvements are rough estimates done by [www. Questline.com](http://www.questline.com). Their estimates give homeowners a reasonable idea about what to expect when it comes to the possible costs and the payback periods of various energy-efficient improvements for the home.

In our example we assume that the home is a 1970s ranch-style home (2,000-square feet) with an inefficient LP furnace (75 percent efficient), an electric rate of eight cents/kWh and a LP rate of \$2.50/gallon. Wind often receives the most publicity, but does it make it right for you?

The low-cost options of weatherization, a set-back thermostat or just turning down the thermostat provide immediate savings. The windows provide the longest payback at around 30 years.

Better options would be looking at

a heat pump. If the up-front installation costs are an issue, go with an air source heat pump, which is about 200 percent efficient. If the upfront costs are not an issue or you're building a new house, go with the ground source heat pump with efficiency around 400 percent. Talk to the co-op's energy expert about heat pumps and our rebate

program.

These numbers do not include an interest rate factored in for borrowing money for the installation cost. If that is the case, assume a five percent added cost to the installation price and increasing the paybacks by five percent as a starting point. ➡

— *Courtesy of www.questline.com*

Monthly ENERGY[®] wise tip

Don't be fooled by expensive electric space heaters — With the number of electric heater styles, shapes and sizes on the market, it's no wonder that consumers are confused when shopping for the right one. Adding to the confusion are the exaggerated claims by a few advertisers, who boast their product has an "exclusive design" that will "save you big bucks on your heating bill." At least one manufacturer claims it can cut heating costs up to 50 percent with its "space-age technology." Space heaters come in three main designs: high-temperature radiant style, natural-convection style and forced fan; each one delivers it with a different method. With space heaters a watt is a watt no matter how it is delivered. The amount of heat coming out is the same as the amount of electricity going in. Therefore, any two heaters with a rating of 1,500-watts will deliver the same amount of heat. A \$25 space heater can do the same thing as the expensive Eden Pure or Amish fireplaces. All of these heaters can cut the furnace bill. Just lower the setting on the furnace's thermostat. In the occupied room a space heater boosts the temperature to a comfortable level. ➡

Researchers search for ways to store electricity for later use

As new portable electronics become more powerful, the inadequacy of supporting battery technology becomes increasingly more noticeable. High-tech laptops, cameras and MP3 players — even hybrid and electric cars — are limited with today's relatively weak batteries.

The problem only grows on the utility scale and has perplexed the electric industry for decades. Yet, the potential payoffs of better batteries in an energy-constrained world has renewed research and development efforts.

Advancements in battery technology could bolster power generation in two big ways: stored electricity could be tapped during periods of peak consumption when power plants are running at full capacity; and renewable energy systems, like solar and wind, could become a reliable resource even on cloudy days or when the wind stopped blowing.

In working toward the goal of developing a better battery the Cooperative Research Network (CRN), an arm of Arlington, Virginia-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, has launched an effort to find the best types for electric co-op use.

“Our consultants are currently looking at all the batteries out there, seeing what's best for ‘asset deferral’ — delaying the need to build new poles, wires and substations by better using what's already in place — and for use with renewables,” said Bob Gibson, senior program manager with CRN. “In the next stage we're planning to test some of the most promising new batteries at co-op sites.”



Golden Valley Electric Association, based in Fairbanks, Alaska, uses the world's most powerful nickel-cadmium battery to hedge against power outages. When needed, the 13,760-battery cell system can provide 27 megawatts of power for 15 minutes. — Courtesy of Patrick J. Endres/Alaskaphotographics.com

Large-scale energy storage technology ranges from glorified lead acid batteries (what's in your car) to more advanced nickel-cadmium batteries (what's in a cordless drill) to newer flow and sodium-sulfur batteries. The latter two, though only in very limited use in the field, are relatively compact, long-lasting and efficient; both show the most promise for storing massive amounts of power for later use.

Other large-scale options are more mechanical than chemical in nature. One involves pumping water uphill when electricity use is low, such as at night, and releasing it through turbines to produce electricity when more electricity is needed. Another

uses excess electricity to compress air, which is then stored in vast underground caverns until it's called on to blast natural gas-fired turbines into action.

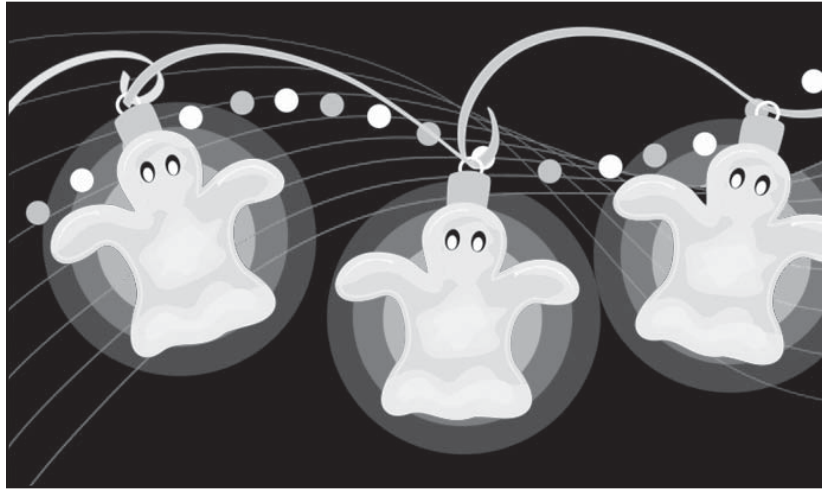
“Pumped storage and compressed air work well, but are only feasible near special geographic features. Batteries, on the other hand, can be put anywhere,” Gibson said. “Although none of the advanced technologies are completely proven, energy storage could solve so many problems. The potential is enormous.”

— *Courtesy of National Rural Electric Cooperative Association & the Cooperative Research Network. Story by Scott Gates*

Electricity is a treat, but don't let it play any tricks this Halloween

The decorative lights, fog machines, black lights and animatronics of Halloween make for adventurous, entertaining times for children and adults. With these decorations, though, the risk of fire or electrocution could be lurking around the corner. It is important to check for electrical hazards before accidents happen. Use the following tips to keep electrical hazards from haunting you this Halloween.

- Inspect electrical decorations for cracked or frayed sockets, loose or bare wires, and loose connections.
- Read manufacturer's instructions regarding installation and maintenance. Check the instructions to see how many light strings can be connected together.
- Always unplug light strings before replacing any bulbs.
- Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, walls or other firm supports. Do not use nails or tacks that could puncture light strings or electrical/extension cords.
- Make sure electrical decorations are approved by a recognized certification organization like UL (Underwriters Laboratory) and marked for outdoor use if you are using them outside. Check www.cpsc.gov or www.ul.com for



Trick or treat! Electrical Halloween decorations should be a “treat” with proper use and not a “trick” leading to an electrical shock.

recalls. Many Halloween toys have been recalled in the past by the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

- Provide well-lit walkways and porch lighting for trick-or-treaters. Make sure the walkways are clear for trick-or-treaters.
- Do not overload your circuit breakers or fuses.
- Plug lights and decorations into circuits protected by ground

fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Portable outdoor GFCIs can be purchased where electrical supplies are sold.

- Don't overload extension cords or place them near, or in, snow or water.
- Make sure decorative lighting is well-ventilated, protected from the weather and a safe distance from anything flammable like dry leaves and shrubs. Do not coil power cords or extension cords while in use or tuck under rugs or drapes.
- Turn out all lights and decorations before leaving or going to bed. Always have at least one fire extinguisher available and know how to use it.

Happy trick-or-treating! 🦋

— *Courtesy of Home Safety Council www.homesafetycouncil.com & Electrical Safety Foundation International www.electrical-safety.org*

Don't dig up trouble! Contact GSOC first this fall!



1-800-252-1166
www.gopherstateonecall.org

Contact Gopher State One Call (GSOC) before doing any digging more than 12-inches deep. Make this call 48 hours before digging for foundations, trees, tiling and more. You can also register on the website at www.gopherstateonecall.org. This gives utilities time to mark their underground lines up to your meter so you are safe! Then contact a licensed electrician to locate the underground lines on your side of the meter. 🦋

Federated focus:



Vote for Annual Meeting candidates Nov. 22

The Nominating Committee presented the following slate of candidates for the Annual Meeting elections November 22.

District 3 Director: David A. Hansen, Jackson; and Irvin Sether, Jackson.

District 4 Director: Lyle Fisher, Jackson; and Craig Hakes, Jackson.

District 1 Nominating Committee: Willis Hinkeldey, Windom; and Cordell Kolander, Lakefield.

District 2 Nominating Committee: Steven Matasovsky, Jackson; and Peter Hodnefield, Lakefield.

The candidates listed above will be voted upon at the Annual Meeting. Other nominations can be made by petition or from the floor.

In addition, nominations were made for Operation Round Up directors: District 3: Kathy Fransen, Jackson; and District 4: Nancy Edlin, Jackson.



Change a Light!

Save with the Change-A-Light incentives currently offered by these local stores on compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs):

- Fleet & Farm Supply, Fairmont
- Fleet & Farm ACE, St. James
- Schwalbach's, Worthington
- Roerig Ace Hardware, Winnebago.

This is how the "Change a Light, Change the World" program works. From now through November 30, 2008, electric cooperative members can buy up to 12 Energy Star compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs) at participating ACE Hardware stores. A \$2 instant rebate applies, while bulb supplies last. It's simple. Just let the cashier know that you are an electric co-op member. Then fill out a rebate slip to receive an instant rebate on each bulb. ➔

Federated's 73rd Annual Meeting Saturday, November 22 at the Jackson County Central High School

1129 North Highway, Jackson, MN

Registration: 7:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m.

- Registration
- Recycle 4 fluorescent bulbs for free
- Free customer pancake breakfast served by the Jackson Lions Club
- Visit booths for Federated, WildBlue and Heartland Security

Meeting starts at 10 a.m.

- Meeting called to order
- Business meeting/reports
- Election of DirectorS and Nominators
- New business: Bylaws & Articles of Incorporation amendment
- Guest Speaker: Ron Schwartau speaks on his rural electrification trip to Soudan, Africa
- Recognize Operation Round Up recipients
- Drawing for door prizes (electric woodstove, electric grill, electric bill credits, gift certificates and more!)

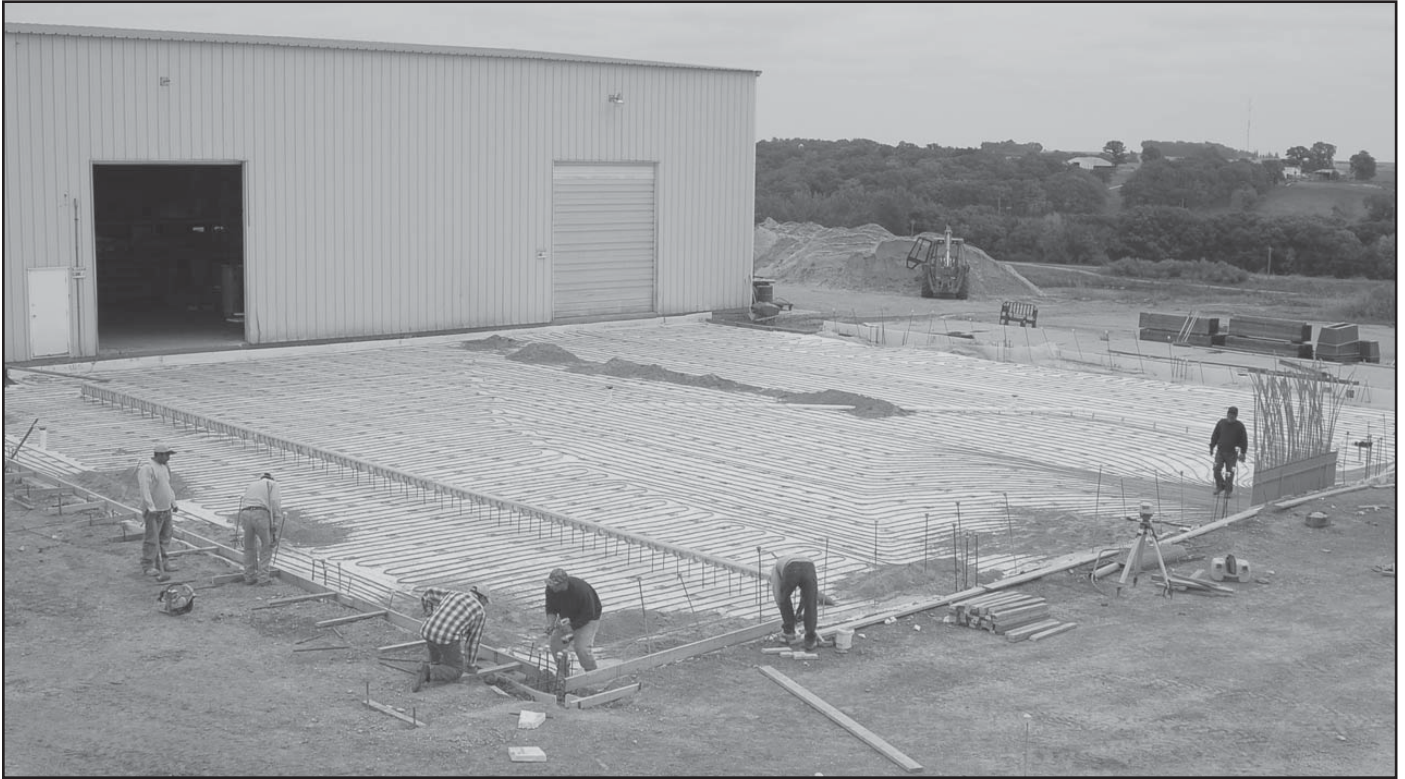
Annual Meeting Attendance Gift:



Let us "serve" you! Receive an ultra-bright LED mini-aluminum flashlight and a black slotted nylon turner as attendance gifts.

Where house? There house...

Warehouse addition progresses for line trucks



Federated's Jackson line trucks hope to have a new home constructed before winter. The 93'x90' metal addition will house the co-op's line trucks and semi-trailer used to move the underground cable plow. It attaches to the 1976 cold storage machine shed (in the background). The 1950 original warehouse is not large enough for four-wheel drive digger trucks. Plus, this addition will have concrete floors heated by two miniboilers (note the tubing layout before the insulation, sand and concrete was spread). This will help melt the snow off overnight and provide better conditions to work on trucks, along with more indoor storage space for power line materials. 🗑️

Bid on the co-op's 1996 Chevrolet pickup in a silent auction



For sale: 1996 half-ton Chevrolet extended cab with V-6 engine. Features include: automatic, AM/FM radio, bed liner and 180,000 miles. To inspect the vehicle or test drive it stop at Federated between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Bids are due by 4 p.m. November 3, 2008. Bids can be mailed or dropped off at Federated's office. Otherwise, e-mail a bid to: swanson@federatedrea.coop. Include your name, phone number, mailing address, e-mail address and bid. Federated reserves the right to reject any or all bids. The minimum bid is \$1,000. 🗑️

Cold weather rule outlines process to avoid winter disconnection and loss of electricity

Co-op members do not need to worry about cold homes from winter disconnection. Just follow the five main points of the cold weather rule to avoid winter disconnection.

Residential customer notice

An electric cooperative utility must not disconnect and must reconnect the utility service of a home between October 15 and April 15 if the disconnection affects the primary heat source for the residential unit **and all of the following conditions are met:**

1. The household income of the customer is at or below 50 percent of the state median household income. A cooperative electric association utility may verify income on forms it provides or obtain verification of income from the local energy assistance provider. A customer is deemed to meet the income requirements of this clause if the customer receives any form of public assistance, including energy assistance that uses an income eligibility threshold set at or below 50 percent of the state median household income;

2. A customer enters into and makes reasonably timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household; and

3. A customer receives referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation or other programs likely to reduce the customer's energy bills. In addition, a cooperative electric association must, between August 15 and October 15 of each year, notify all residential customers of the provisions of this section.

Customers facing disconnection

Before disconnecting service to a residential customer between October 15 and April 15, an electric cooperative association must provide the following information to a customer:

1. A notice of the proposed disconnection;



2. A statement with the customer's rights and responsibilities;

3. A list of local energy assistance providers;

4. Forms on which to declare an inability to pay; and


5. A statement explaining available time-payment plans and other options to secure continued utility service.

Restrictions for disconnection

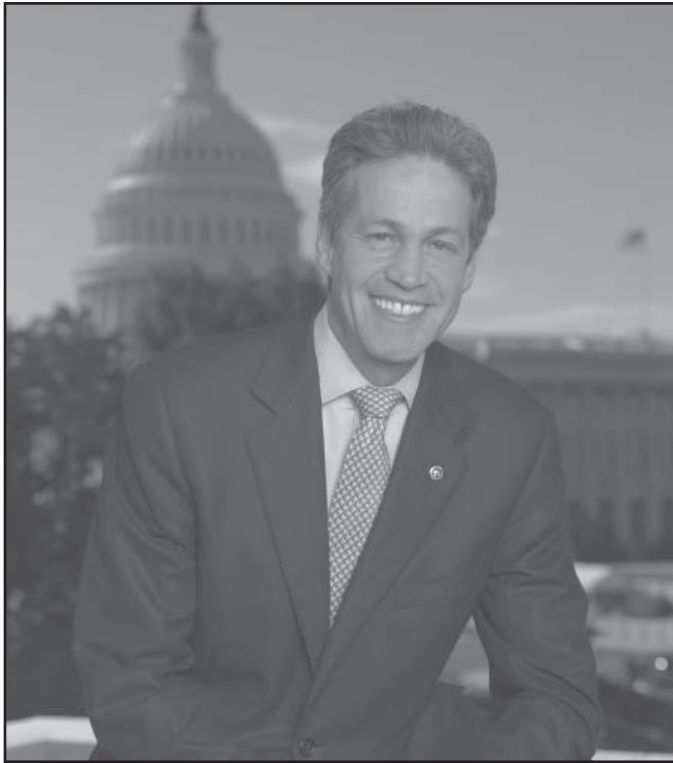
1. If a customer must be involuntarily disconnected between October 15 and April 15 for failure to comply with residential disconnection provisions, it must not occur on a Friday, unless the customer declines to enter into a payment agreement offered that day in person or via personal contact by telephone by a cooperative electric association;

2. Also, the disconnection must not occur on a weekend, holiday or the day before a holiday, when utility offices are closed, or after the close of a business on a day when disconnection is permitted, unless a field representative of a cooperative electric association who is authorized to enter into a payment agreement, accept payment and continue service offers a payment agreement to the customer; and

3. If a customer does not respond to a disconnection notice, the customer must not be disconnected until the utility investigates whether the residential unit is actually occupied. If the unit is found to be occupied, the utility must immediately inform the occupant of the provisions of this section. If the unit is unoccupied, the utility must give seven days written notice of the proposed disconnection to the local energy assistance provider before making a disconnection. If, prior to disconnection, a customer appeals a notice of involuntary disconnection, as provided by the utility's established appeal procedure, the utility must not disconnect until the appeal is resolved.

Call your local electric co-op with any questions. 

Senator Coleman to be honored for his commitment to co-ops



Senator Norm Coleman will be recognized for his dedication and support of Minnesota's electric cooperatives with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) 2009 Distinguished Service Award.

Coleman, who is currently serving his first term in the United States Senate, was chosen for the award due to his efforts to reduce the cost of borrowing for cooperatives' electricity infrastructure and commitment to helping co-ops recover from destruction caused by floods and storms. Coleman's work in the U.S. Senate has ensured electric cooperative members across the country have access to affordable and reliable electricity.

Minnesota's electric cooperatives chose to acknowledge this recognition during the month of October, which is "Co-op Month."

"I'm honored to receive this award," said Senator Coleman. "I'm especially moved that it comes from an organization like NRECA that shares my commitment to rural America."

The award recognizes national leaders who consistently demonstrate support for issues that are important to electric cooperatives.

Senator Coleman will receive the award during the 2009 NRECA Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C., in May. He was nominated by the Minnesota Rural Electric Association and selected by the NRECA Board of Directors. 🖱

Blooming friendships makes The Blooming Thistle rewarding

— *Continued from Page 3*

The Blooming Thistle offers to visitors. "We also like to host demonstrations," Berle said. "This year we have an antique cider press and make apple cider for everyone; if you have apple cider, then you need snacks for it to wash down. Plus, we have things to entertain kids, like kittens and puppies. I even try to have something for men, like John Deere and hunting items."

Most of Berle's clients are local, but she draws in visitors from the Cities, Iowa, South Dakota and Wisconsin. "One couple even comes from Utah," Berle said. "They have family here so they visit each summer. That's one of the great things about the job — seeing the regulars. You build a lot of relationships; it's fun to see people look around and linger, just enjoying each other's company. One of the hurdles in starting the Blooming Thistle was that we are kind of out in the boondocks, but I always believed that if we built the business, people would come. It wouldn't just be a craft store. It would be a fun outing for everyone."


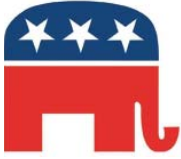



The Blooming Thistle is located on the original homestead of Berle's mother-in-law, Mary Ann (County Road 10 about 10 miles east and one mile north of Leavenworth or about three miles southeast of Sleepy Eye). "It's a working farm," Berle said. "We raise corn, beans, peas, hogs and sometimes cattle. It's a busy place and the craft store makes it even busier. It's amazing that we get the store ready for each of our open weekends. Plus, weather is another challenge. We like to put items outside so if it rains, we have to move it all back inside. It's really too much work for one person. Fortunately, I have a wonderful group of friends who help me. I tend to be too creative sometimes and make a big mess before I get things straightened out. My friends keep me on track. My husband and mother-in-law are also great with contributing to our inventory. Everyone's taste is different and they bring something unique to The Blooming Thistle."

The Blooming Thistle is usually open one weekend each month, May through December (Friday and Saturday 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and Sunday noon-5 p.m.). The remaining 2008 weekends are October 10-12, November 7-9, November 14-16 and December 5-7. For more information, visit www.bloomingthistle.com or e-mail bloomingthistle@yahoo.com.

"The best part of the job is the people you meet," Berle said. "The friendships you make are often with people you wouldn't interact with normally, but you get to know them because they share the same passion as you and become lifelong heart-to-heart friends." 🖱

Candidates and their energy policy

Make an informed decision at the November election

Candidate & Party	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Domestic Oil Production	Auto Mileage Standards	Renewable Energy	Nuclear Energy	Energy Efficiency
Information courtesy of Tech Resources, Inc. "On the Energy Campaign Trail"						
Barack Obama/ Democrat 	Supports a market-based cap-and-trade system to cut emissions 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. Auction off 100 percent of credits.	Possible lifting of drilling bans in some offshore waters as part of a broader energy package. Set up a process to investigate drilling in certain shale formations.	In support of raising fuel economy standards around 4 percent per year. Proposes spending \$4 billion to allow auto manufacturers to upgrade plants.	Calls for obtaining 10 percent of our electricity from renewable sources by 2012 and 25 percent by 2025.	"Before expansion of nuclear power is considered, issues must be addressed: security of nuclear fuel and waste, waste storage and proliferation." Does not support Yucca Mountain nuclear waste project or waste reprocessing.	Set goals of reducing electricity demand 15 percent from DOE's projected 2020 levels, making all new buildings carbon neutral by 2030 and overhauling federal appliance efficiency standards.
John McCain/ Republican 	Supports a market-based cap-and-trade system to cut emissions 60 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. Initially would give away credits, moving toward auction.	Would lift restrictions on drilling in the Outer Continental Shelf. Has historically opposed drilling in ANWAR, but has said he will continue to examine the issue. (Springfield, MO, June 2008)	Suggests better enforcement of existing fuel efficiency standards is needed.	Supports renewables through "an even-handed system of tax credits" that will remain in place until the market transforms sufficiently to the point where they are no longer needed.	Wants to build 45 new nuclear power plants by 2030. Supports Yucca Mountain nuclear waste project. Supports research into nuclear waste reprocessing.	Proposes applying a higher efficiency standard to new buildings (leased or purchased) or retrofitting existing buildings. Develop "smart grid" power lines to increase electricity savings.
Ralph Nader/ Independent 	Supports a carbon tax, rather than a cap-and-trade program, cutting emissions 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.	Opposed to opening additional offshore areas to drilling.	Supports raising fuel efficiency standards.	Supports investment in renewable energies "like wind and other solar power."	Opposes nuclear power.	Call for heavy investment in energy efficiency.
Cynthia McKinney/ Green Party 	Goal of carbon neutrality in 20 years, but no specifics.	Opposes offshore drilling.	In support of increasing fuel economy standards.	Calls for federal commitment to the production of cheap, non-toxic solar photovoltaic technology.	Calls for the "early retirement of nuclear power reactors" (in no more than five years). Nuclear waste management strategies must be above ground.	"Energy management must be governed by the principle of conservation, efficiency and clean renewables."
Bob Barr/ Libertarian 	Opposed to cap-and-trade systems; "would do grievous damage to the American economy."	Has called for open exploration and development of U.S. oil resources, including oil in the Outer Continental Shelf and ANWAR.	Is opposed to federal fuel economy standards at any level.	Supports development driven by the private sector of alternative energy sources.	Supports nuclear power.	No specific positions identified.

Save more with larger rebates for limited time on Energy Star clothes washers, refrigerators

This fall you will have the opportunity to receive larger rebates:

- \$150 or \$125 on Energy Star refrigerator (with recycling of the old one)
- \$100 or \$75 Energy Star clothes washer.

These larger rebates are available for a limited time and cannot be combined with the cooperative's standard Energy Star rebate.

Two convenient options

1. Use the Best Buy coupons between October 14-30, 2008. Present the coupon from the newsletter when you make your purchase and receive the \$150 or \$100 rebate instantly. This rebate lasts for only two weeks (see coupons for other requirements). The old refrigerator must be picked up by Best Buy for recycling. Some local appliance stores will also honor the Best Buy coupons during this two-week period as listed under the coupons.


2. Purchase your new Energy Star refrigerator or clothes washer from a local appliance dealer. Use the rebate form to receive \$125 on the Energy Star refrigerator with recycling of the old refrigerator. Use the rebate form to receive \$75 on an Energy Star clothes washer. You have a six-week window with the local dealers to make your new Energy Star purchase: October 14 through November 30, 2008. Rebate forms are available from the local appliance stores, the co-op's website or call or e-mail to request it. Send your rebate form and copy of your paid receipt to your electric cooperative before December 15 and your rebate check will be credited to your electric bill.


Even if you're not buying a new appliance go to mn.brighterideas.com or the co-op's website to register for \$500 of free groceries. ➔


Valid 10/14/08 - 10/30/08 only in Best Buy® Stores

\$150 instant savings
on a new ENERGY STAR REFRIGERATOR
at Best Buy®

 a brighter idea

 ENERGY STAR

 4 000891 93707 3

 BEST BUY

Customer: Best Buy employees are not eligible for this promotion. Markdowns taken from regular or sale prices. Offer good on all ENERGY STAR qualified refrigerators, regularly priced \$999.99 and above. Excludes Electrolux major appliances; Outlet Center items, clearance, demo and open-box items. Selection varies by store. Not good in combination with any other coupons. Valid only at Minnesota and Sioux Falls, South Dakota Best Buy stores in the U.S.A. Valid on in-stock or special-order items. Offer not valid on bestbuy.com. No rainchecks. No dealers. Coupon must be presented and surrendered at time of purchase. Limit one coupon per household. No copies. No cash back. Cash value is 1/100th of 1 cent. Coupon valid 10/14/08 - 10/30/08.

Cashier Instructions: Scan coupon UPC. Scan all product(s) being sold. Press "Total." Write "VOID" on coupon and place in register coupon media file.


Coupon Expires: October 30, 2008

ENERGY STAR and the ENERGY STAR mark are registered U.S. marks.

Valid 10/14/08 - 10/30/08 only in Best Buy® Stores

\$100 instant savings
on a new ENERGY STAR CLOTHES WASHER
at Best Buy®

 a brighter idea

 ENERGY STAR

 4 000891 93734 9

 BEST BUY

Customer: Best Buy employees are not eligible for this promotion. Markdowns taken from regular or sale prices. Offer good on all ENERGY STAR qualified clothes washers, regularly priced \$599.99 and above. Excludes Electrolux major appliances; Outlet Center items, clearance, demo and open-box items. Selection varies by store. Not good in combination with any other coupons. Valid only at Minnesota and Sioux Falls, South Dakota Best Buy stores in the U.S.A. Valid on in-stock or special-order items. Offer not valid on bestbuy.com. No rainchecks. No dealers. Coupon must be presented and surrendered at time of purchase. Limit one coupon per household. No copies. No cash back. Cash value is 1/100th of 1 cent. Coupon valid 10/14/08 - 10/30/08.

Cashier Instructions: Scan coupon UPC. Scan all product(s) being sold. Press "Total." Write "VOID" on coupon and place in register coupon media file.

Coupon Expires: October 30, 2008

ENERGY STAR and the ENERGY STAR mark are registered U.S. marks.

Locally, these stores will also honor the Best Buy coupons during October 14-30. These stores are: Dan's Appliance, Fairmont; Dareld's Appliance, Fairmont; Smith Appliance Service, Windom; Town'N Country Appliance, Windom; Lien Electric, Worthington; and Perkin's Appliance, Jackson.

 a brighter idea

Fill Your Fridge

Between October 14 and November 30, 2008, visit www.mnbrighterideas.com, take a short quiz and you'll be entered to win.

The Grand Prize
\$500 in groceries to fill your fridge!

First Place Prizes
Up to 28 first place prizes will be given away (one per Great River Energy's participating 28 member cooperatives) for \$100 in groceries.





Readers' recipes

This spud (recipe) is for you to enjoy!

“Whip” up a hearty fall meal with a new potato recipe. The family is sure to dig it! ➡

Submit your mint recipes worth a mint!



A touch of mint tops off the perfect dessert or meal. Share with us your recipes using mint, whether it's creme de menthe, peppermint candy, mint chips, spearmint or more!

Mail these mint recipes by October 25 to: Editor, Federated Rural Electric, PO Box 69, Jackson MN 56143-0069 or e-mail to christoffer@federatedrea.coop. Otherwise, drop it off at your local electric co-op. Add your name and phone number. ➡

Member corrects recipe:

In last month's Pepsi Cake recipe by Bev Hines it called for 1 tsp. salt and it should have been 1 tsp. soda. She apologizes for the error. ➡

Ilene's German Potato Salad by Clara Johnson, Windom

- 1 lb. bacon
 - ¼ c. chopped onion
 - ¼ c. flour
 - ¼ c. sugar
 - ¼ c. vinegar
 - 10-12 medium potatoes
- Cook bacon until crisp; drain and crumble, reserving ½ cup fat. Cook the onion in the reserved fat until tender. Blend in the flour and sugar; add the vinegar and 2 c. water. Cook and stir until thickened and bubbly. Add the bacon and potatoes. Heat thoroughly, tossing lightly. Serves 10-12. ➡

Potato Chip Potatoes by Mary Dummer, Lafayette

- 6 med. potatoes, peeled and cut into ½" cubes
 - ¾ c. crushed potato chips, divided
 - ½ c. onion, chopped
 - 2 T. butter, melted
 - salt & pepper to taste
- In a bowl combine the potatoes, ½ c. potato chips, onion, butter, salt and pepper. Toss to combine. Transfer to a greased shallow 2-quart baking dish. Sprinkle with the remaining potato chips. Bake uncovered at 350° for 40 to 50 minutes or until the potatoes are tender. ➡

Barbecue Potatoes by Terese Gruber, New Ulm

- ¼ c. butter, melted
 - 3 T. catsup
 - 1 tsp. chili powder
 - 1 tsp. light brown sugar
 - 1/8 tsp. salt or less
 - 1/8 tsp. ground red pepper
 - 4 med. baking potatoes
- Preheat oven to 425°. Grease a baking pan; set aside. In a small bowl combine the melted butter, catsup, chili powder, brown sugar, salt and red pepper. Cut each potato lengthwise into eight wedges. Place in the pan. Brush the potatoes with some of the sauce. Bake 30 minutes. Brush occasionally with the remainder of the sauce until the potatoes are tender. Serves four. ➡

Bacon-Wrapped Potatoes by Lois Champine, Ceylon

- 1 small onion, thinly sliced
 - 4 bacon strips
 - 2 medium baking potatoes, halved lengthwise
- Layer the onion slices on the cut side of two potato halves. Top with the other potato half. Wrap each potato with two bacon strips. Secure with toothpicks. Place on a lightly greased baking pan. Bake uncovered at 325° for one hour and 20 minutes or until the potato is tender and the bacon is crispy. ➡

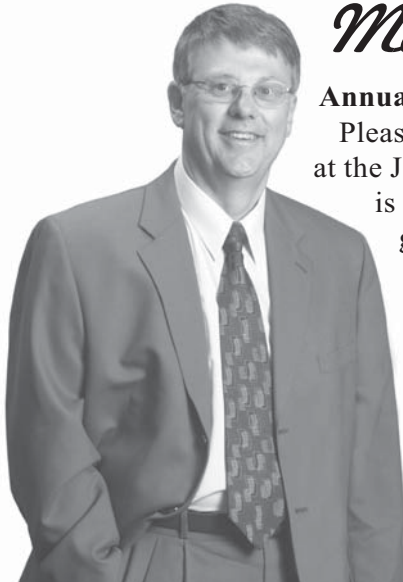
Ranch Potatoes by Sharon Hinkeldey, Windom

- 8 large red potatoes
 - 1 c. ranch salad dressing
 - 1 c. sour cream
 - 1 c. cheddar cheese, divided
 - ¼ c. crumbled cooked bacon
 - 1 tsp. salt
- Preheat oven to 350°. Cut the potatoes into quarters. Place in a large sauce pan. Cover with water and bring to a boil. Cook until tender or about eight minutes. Drain well. While the potatoes cook, combine the salad dressing, sour cream, ½ c. cheddar cheese and bacon in a large bowl. Add the potatoes and salt. Stir well. Spoon into a medium baking dish. Top with the remaining cheese. Bake potatoes until bubbly or about 20 minutes.

Note: I have used the frozen Simply Potatoes red potato wedges. It takes 1½ (1 lb. 4 oz.) bags and store-bought bacon bits. Use the same amount of bacon. ➡

Party Baked Potatoes by Jan Gove, Windom

- Peel medium baking potatoes. Dry thoroughly. Dip in melted butter. Roll in crushed corn flake crumbs. Bake in a covered dish 1 hour at 350°. Serve with butter or sour cream. ➡



Richard 'Rick' Burud

Manager's message

Annual Meeting approaches — Nov. 22

Please mark your calendar for November 22 at the Jackson County Central gymnasium. This is the date of our Annual Meeting. You'll get a chance to exercise your vote on a bylaws/article change, director and nominator elections.

Carbon dioxide (CO₂) legislation

CO₂ legislation on the state and/or federal level may be a prime driver in your electric rates in the future. Some states are looking at a regional cap and trade system, while the federal legislators are looking at a national cap and trade system. Our pledge to you is we'll keep you informed, work on

your behalf and call on you when we need your help with legislation.

Costs to increase in 2009

All of our power suppliers — Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), Great River Energy (GRE) and L&O Power Co-op (Basin Electric) — have announced wholesale prices will increase effective January 1, 2009. We will pass these additional costs on to you via the power cost adjustment (PCA). We don't like passing costs through to the members, but as their costs increase, the customer is the only one who pays. Energy (oil and natural gas) and escalating copper, steel and aluminum prices lead the pack on these additional costs, as well as low water levels for WAPA's hydroelectric power.

Make it a safe harvest season

Be sure to look up during this harvest season so no augers or equipment get into our power lines. Safety is first at our cooperative; we urge each of you to have a safe harvest. 🍂

WILDBLUE PRICES ARE



Special fall price

Installed
(Regular price \$239)

- High-speed satellite Internet up to 30 times faster than dialup.
- 3 years of local service with local technicians.
- 3 monthly packages available; prices start at \$49.95

Call Federated at 847-3520, 728-8366 or 1-800-321-3520 for more information & application.



Rural Electric

Official monthly newsletter published by
Federated Rural Electric
77100 US Hwy 71, PO Box 69
Jackson, MN 56143-0069
E-mail: info@federatedrea.coop
Website: <http://www.federatedrea.coop>

Office hours: 8 a.m.-4:30p.m.
Monday-Friday

Richard Burud, General Manager

David Post, President — 853-4518
David A. Hansen, V. President — 847-3530
Jim Oltman, Sec./Treasurer — 464-3479
Glenn Dicks — 662-5321
Lyle Fisher — 847-4757
David Meschke — 238-1122
Jon Saxen — 764-3771

The Board of Directors meets the last business day of the month at 9 a.m. at the Jackson office. Regular board meetings are open to the membership. Members interested in discussing business items should contact the general manager or president three days before the meeting.

Board meeting highlights

Federated Rural Electric's Board of Directors conducted a teleconference for their board meeting September 30. They acted on these issues:

- Approved returning about \$488,000 to Federated members from patronage in 1989, 1990 and 1997 as a credit on their November 1 electric bills.
- Approved the write-offs for 2008 that will be turned over to the collection agency.
- Updated on the recent audit by the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Reviewed the 2009 employee health insurance quotation.
- Learned who the Nominating Committee selected as candidates for the membership to vote upon at the Annual Meeting November 22. (See story on Page 8).
- Updated on Federated's wind production at Welcome.
- Selected attendees for upcoming meetings. 🍂