

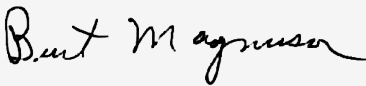
**YOU'RE INVITED!**  
*people. power. possibilities.*

## LEGAL NOTICE

### 85th Annual Meeting Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative

Notice is hereby given that the annual meeting of Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative will be held in-person and online Saturday, March 26, 2022, at 10:00 a.m.

The purpose of the meeting will be to conduct regular annual meeting business. Registration is required. For those who cannot attend or join the online meeting, it will be recorded for viewing at a later date.



Burt Magnuson | Secretary,  
Freeborn Mower  
Electric Cooperative  
Board of Directors

## 85<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING

### Saturday, March 26, 2022

#### WHO:

You, the member-owners of Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative

#### WHAT:

85th Annual Meeting

#### WHEN:

8:00. a.m. Registration & Breakfast Begins

10:00 a.m. Business Meeting Begins

#### WHERE:

Albert Lea High School (*Pending Covid Restrictions*)

2000 Tiger Lane, Albert Lea, MN

*Masks Required*

Online

The Annual Meeting will also be offered online.

*Preregistration Required*

#### WHY:

Because Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative is owned and controlled by its member-owners. Be knowledgeable! Participate in the cooperative, learn important information about the past year, current information, and what we see in the year ahead.

**WATCH FOR  
MORE INFO**

IN OUR  
UPCOMING  
ANNUAL REPORT



High school seniors who have applied for the Luck of the Draw Scholarship are encouraged to attend! If the student is selected for a scholarship and is present at the annual meeting, he/she will also receive a special gift. #1581203 Applications for the Luck of the Draw Scholarships will be accepted through March 11, 2022.

## ceo message

Jim Krueger, President & CEO



## WHAT WE EXPECT IN THE 2022 STATE LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The 2022 Minnesota State Legislative Session started on January 31. Certainly, this will be a big year for elections, which typically casts a long shadow on everything else. The offices of the Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, State Auditor, and all U.S. House of Representatives members and all state senate and house legislative seats are up for election. The legislative district maps will be redrawn, so legislative candidates will not know who their voters are until spring. Based on 2020 census data, rural Minnesota will lose at least one legislative district and the Twin Cities will gain one.

There are several topics that we expect to come up this year. One of these will be broadband connectivity to rural Minnesota in areas that are unserved or underserved. A related issue revolves around attachments made to electric cooperative power poles. There are parties pushing for Minnesota to legislate a standard fee that electric cooperatives can charge cable and telecom providers for the use of co-op poles. For-profit companies will have many lobbyists working on this initiative at the Capitol, which electric cooperatives will

oppose. Electric cooperatives do support reducing the digital divide in rural Minnesota. #1425800 However, the electric cooperatives also recognize that each electric cooperative sets its pole attachment fees based on its own unique costs. Standardizing pole attachment fees across the state would mean the possibility of fees that do not cover an electric cooperative's costs and therefore will subsequently require the co-op members, through the electric rates they pay, to subsidize the activities of for-profit companies.

Other topics we expect to be addressed are:

- Funding allocation for electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure developed in rural Minnesota.
- It is expected that there will be numerous proposals made to impose additional mandates impacting the ongoing transition to renewable energy sources. Electric cooperatives will continue to engage in these discussions with an eye toward ensuring continued relative cost stability and reliable electric service.
- Also: home weatherization assistance; railway crossing issues; property tax issues; and the implementation of the Energy Conservation and Optimization (ECO) Act.

## FMEC RECOGNIZED AS A 5-STAR CO-OP



### A 5-STAR CO-OP:

- Encourages its members to learn about federal, state, and local elections.
- Empowers its members to make independent, educated decisions about voting for the future of their cooperative and community.
- Engages with their elected officials by inviting them to visit the cooperative and meet with their cooperative's members. Develops a political game plan to advance and advocate for issues on behalf of their electric cooperative.

**Rural communities depend on Co-op Voters. Be active in our democracy. Be a Co-op Voter.**

“Thank you for your commitment to the Co-ops Vote program by becoming a 5-Star Co-op! The effort you and your employees have put into the program is a stellar example of your Commitment to Community, to ensure that rural America's voices are heard. . . . Co-ops Vote is about more than voting—it's about engaging in the political life of your community. The political interests of a co-op are, by definition, the interests of its membership.”

— Excerpted from the award announcement letter to Jim Krueger from Jim Matheson, CEO National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

## member news

### OFFICE CLOSED: STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY

Our office will be closed on Monday, February 21, 2022 to allow our employees to participate in our annual event. For emergencies or outage reporting, call (507) 373-6421 or (800) 734-6421.

### DISTRICT 2 MEMBERS: BALLOT DEADLINE

The election for director representing District 2 is contested. Since more than one nominee came forth, a mail ballot was sent to all members in that district on Monday, January 31, 2022. Returned ballots are due by 3:30 p.m. on Friday, February 18, 2022. There are also provisions for electronic voting in the election. Electronic voting instructions were included with the ballot materials. Electronic votes must be cast by the same deadline as the mail ballots.

Congratulations to Frank Fryer and Bill Trygstad on their reelection. The election for director representing District 5 and District 8 were not contested. The elected directors will be seated to the Board during the upcoming annual meeting.

### PHOTOGRAPHERS! SCENERY PHOTOS WANTED.

FMEC is building its photo library in advance of a possible 2023 calendar. We are looking for photos that depict the four seasons in southern Minnesota.

- No photos of people will be accepted.
- Members are invited to submit no more than two photos.
- Submitted photos must belong to the member and be one that the member took himself/herself.
- You must be 18 years of age to submit a photo. Submissions must include the following: Name of the member/photographer; FMEC account number; address; phone number; email address; and a brief description of the photo.
- Submissions should be made electronically as a JPG file. The file should be at least 300 dpi at a size of 12" X 9" or larger, with a horizontal orientation.
- Submit photos by September 1, 2022.
- Email photos to: michelle.rayman@fmec.coop

## Help Us Find Them UNCLAIMED CAPITAL CREDIT CHECKS



**Sharing in the retirement of Capital Credits is a benefit of your membership in Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative (FMEC). Capital Credits represent member equity in the cooperative. Each member is assigned a Capital Credit account. As you pay your electric bills, the co-op tracks your electric consumption and the revenue received from your account. Through the retirement of Capital Credits, you receive your share of the co-op's excess revenue after all bills are paid.**

Each year, we have some former members who we can no longer locate in order to retire their Capital Credits. #1997801 When Capital Credits go unclaimed, the funds are used to support the higher education of our members and/or their children who reside in our local area.

The following members had their 2021 General Retirement Capital Credit checks returned by the post office. If you know how they may be contacted, please call the FMEC office or email contact updates to Joanne Miller at joanne.miller@fmec.coop.

- |                                |                           |                           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Aker, Kaytlynn S               | Hoiland, Kristen J        | Perleberg, Ronald         |
| Bendickson, Derek R            | Homebound LLC             | Plucinski, Teresa M       |
| Benson, Christine L            | Hood, Kenneth C           | Ponce, Ralphita           |
| Berg, Tania M                  | Hormann, Stacey L         | Radel, Allan              |
| Bergstrom, Blair R             | I Mobile Repair Inc       | Reeves, Laetrice W        |
| Bonsack, David L               | Imgrund, Roxanne L        | Rivera, Edwin             |
| Bremseth, Kenneth L            | Jaspers, Dennis           | Rocklin, Aaron            |
| Brown, Alyssa N                | Johnson, Awaz A           | Rodriguez, Jordan A       |
| Brown, Luke J                  | Kalis, Roland             | RoL, Sharon L             |
| Buchanan, Luke                 | Kempe, Amanda M           | Rosenthal, Chris M        |
| Calow, Michael A               | Klaehn, Kyle D            | Salveson, Jerome          |
| Carter, Natasha L              | Krinkie, Lacey M          | Schablin, Richard A       |
| Charron, Timothy K             | Kromminga, Elisabeth      | Senholtz, Joe             |
| Chicos, Joseph                 | Krowiorz, Elijah S        | Setzer, Oliver L          |
| Clifton, Kimberly L            | Krueger, Morgan J         | Simonson, Loni            |
| Coalson, Chris                 | Kulish, Jade H            | Sims, James F             |
| Coburn, Dennis J               | Lar, Ma L                 | Sloan, Elizabeth J        |
| Colby, Megan M                 | Larson, Lynette K         | Somnis, Laurie A          |
| Corcoran, Michael D            | Lopez Alnedida, Yamilia C | Spangler, Craig M         |
| Cramer, Douglas L              | Mahon, Britney A          | Starling, Vassandra L     |
| CTF Inc (Terry Gordon)         | Mercado, Shellbie N       | Stayton, Amanda R         |
| Dean, Michael A                | Metro Enterprises Inc     | Stein, Pat J              |
| DePeppe, Lacinda J             | Miller, Ross              | Stewart, Joe              |
| Diaz, Richard F                | Miller, Ryan D            | Stewart, Lyndsey J        |
| Earley, Shawn D                | Miranda, Gabriela J       | Tellez, Marisela J        |
| Evers, Jeremiah J              | Moen, Jordan M            | Tenborg, Gayle M          |
| Fairchild, Monica J            | Mogren, Jordan J          | Thorpe, William W Jr      |
| Faugstad, James P              | Mohsen, Juanita           | Tomfohrde, Dan L          |
| Financial Security Partner LLC | Monty, Charles R          | Twait, Dean V             |
| Finley, Lawrence               | Moo, Hsa                  | Ubben, Chris J            |
| Flatness, Glenn                | Needham, Jake J           | US Cable of Coastal Texas |
| Gilderhus, Carol A             | O'Leary, Andrew           | Van Camp, Virgil S        |
| Groff, David R                 | Olmeda, Felix             | Von Hagen, Mike           |
| Grover, William J              | Olson, Kyle O             | Warner, Jason L           |
| Hagen, Dellan E                | Parmenter, Randy C        | Widmer, Karington M       |
| Hart, James G                  | Peck, Alexis J            | Williamson, Lorene        |
| Hensley, Brian M               | Perez, Lazaro J           |                           |
| Herman, Taysha E               | Perkins, Larry M          |                           |

**SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE! APPLY NOW.**



*As part of our community involvement and outreach efforts, Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative (FMEC) is pleased to offer a variety of scholarship opportunities to our members. Our hope is that by supporting the students in our community, we're making our communities better!*

**LUCK OF THE DRAW SCHOLARSHIP**

FMEC is awarding ten scholarships of \$1,000 during a drawing held live at the cooperative's annual meeting on Saturday, March 26, 2022. Funding is available through our unclaimed capital credit dollars.

**Qualifications:**

- Applicant must be a graduating high school senior.
- Parents/legal guardians must be active members of Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative at the time of the drawing and reside in our service territory.
- Recipients must be enrolled as a full-time college student in the fall of 2022.
- Proof of enrollment must be presented to FMEC before the funds will be disbursed to the school but does not need to accompany the application.

Deadline to apply is March 11, 2022 by 3:30 p.m. Application details are available online at [www.fmec.coop/scholarships](http://www.fmec.coop/scholarships).

**LINEWORKER SCHOLARSHIP**

FMEC offers two \$1,000 scholarships to applicants pursuing a post-secondary education in an electric lineworker program. Deadline to apply is May 1st.

**Qualifications:**

- Any applicant enrolling in a lineworker program or any applicant who can prove they are on a waiting list for the next open enrollment period.
- Preference will be given to FMEC members and residents of Freeborn County and Mower County.

Deadline to apply is May 1st. Application details are available online at [www.fmec.coop/scholarships](http://www.fmec.coop/scholarships).

**RIVERLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

FMEC is proud to offer scholarships to Riverland Community College. #1997801 Scholarships are awarded to children of FMEC members and adult FMEC members who are returning to school to further their education.

**Qualifications:**

- Be a current member of FMEC
- Have financial need
- Be a full-time student in any field (non-traditional students encouraged to apply)

Applicants must contact Riverland Community College for application details and deadlines.

 **RURAL ELECTRIC YOUTH TOUR 2022**

**Expand your horizons with the Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. — June 14 – 19, 2022.**

Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative (FMEC) will sponsor two student delegates from our service territory, all expenses paid to attend this event in our nation's capital city. Travel and briefings for the students will be coordinated through Minnesota Rural Electric Association. At a time when energy is at the forefront of the nation's issues, this is a great opportunity to learn how government works and what the electric cooperative business model is all about. There will also be tours of memorials and museums in the city.

Applicants must be juniors or seniors in high school, the child or dependent of current FMEC members, and reside in our service territory. Application materials are available from the FMEC office, or downloadable from our website at [www.fmec.coop](http://www.fmec.coop). The deadline to apply is Friday, February 11, 2022, at 3:30 p.m. *Please direct questions to Lori Jimenez, Administrative/Member Services Representative, at [lori.jimenez@fmec.coop](mailto:lori.jimenez@fmec.coop) or (507) 379-8852.*

**OPERATION ROUND UP® PROGRAM AWARDS \$17,555**

Your small change adds up! Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative's (FMEC) Operation Round Up® program distributed \$17,555 to 28 area organizations and charitable causes in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2021. A list of area organizations receiving funds can be viewed at [www.fmec.coop](http://www.fmec.coop).

Through ORU, FMEC gives its member-owners the opportunity to give back to the community by rounding up their monthly electric bill to the nearest dollar. The rounded up funds, no more than \$11.88 per year, per member, are placed in a trust fund that is administered by a Trust Board comprised of FMEC member-volunteers.

**READY TO RESCUE**

The Geneva Volunteer Fire Department, was established in 1919. Recently, the department has responded to an average of sixty calls per year, about forty-five of which are medical related. It is one of fifteen departments in Freeborn County and consists of twenty-two volunteers, of which four are EMTs and six are First Responders.

The department is equipped to conduct automobile extrication, grain bin rescue, medical calls, and any other emergency that might arise. The department is a member of the Freeborn County Fire Association comprised of the Sheriff's Department, Mayo Ambulance, Freeborn County Dispatchers, Freeborn County Emergency Manager, Red Cross, and the local community colleges.



**\$2,000**  
ORU GRANT

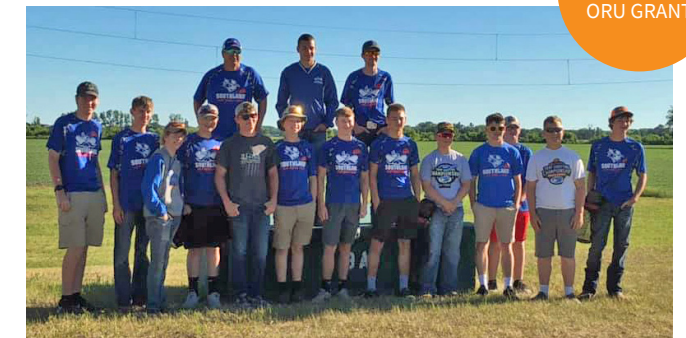
*The Geneva Volunteer Fire Department was a fourth quarter recipient of Operation Round Up® grant funds.*

**MEET THE SOUTHLAND CLAY TARGET TEAM**

The Southland Clay Target Team, Adams, was a recipient of an Operation Round Up® grant. The grant helped fund expenses associated with additional practice and participation in tournaments. The organization focuses on safe handling and proper maintenance of firearms, leadership, team building, fun, and marksmanship. The team, active for about ten years, has seen a significant participation increase. Much of the funding for the team is from private donations.

"Clay target sports allows athletes that might not be competitive in traditional sports to become leaders and excel while helping others along the way," noted Mike Walerak, Head Coach. "We promote leadership and lead by example at competitions. We have been commended and used as an example for our professionalism and ethics."

**\$500**  
ORU GRANT



*The Southland Clay Target Team was a fourth quarter recipient of Operation Round Up® grant funds.*



*The team was recognized as 2021 Skeet Conference Runner Up.*

# BE PREPARED FOR WINTER STORMS AND POWER OUTAGES

When your power goes out, so do we!



*Winter storms can cause prolonged power outages by weighing power lines down with ice, causing trees to fall into lines, or creating hazardous road conditions resulting in vehicle accidents with power poles. To safely weather a winter outage, you need to prepare and know what to do when a storm strikes.*

When outages occur, our crews work diligently to restore electric service, no matter the weather conditions. Please have patience, as it may take time to deal with the aftermath of storms and high winds. Our goal is to have electric service restored as quickly and safely as possible. Please review the accompanying article on how Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative (FMEC) approaches widespread power outages.

**For your family's comfort and safety, be prepared for whatever Mother Nature sends our way.**

- Have on hand a ready supply of canned, non-perishable food and bottled water, medicines, and necessities like baby supplies. Extra blankets or sleeping bags should be easily accessible. Check that your flashlights work and that you have fresh replacement batteries.
- Avoid using candles. Do not bring indoors any gas or charcoal grills. These are for outdoor cooking only and pose grave safety concerns, both for fire and air quality, if used improperly in a confined area.

**Make an emergency plan to move to a safe and warm location, should that become necessary.**

- First, consider if it is safe to leave your home. For instance, it may be better to not risk snow covered roads in a blizzard. If you do leave, make sure that family members or close friends know where you will be going.

*Always assume downed power lines are still energized.*

- Just because a power line is down, there is a strong chance that it remains energized. Touching it could cause electrocution!
- Should your vehicle slide off the road and strike a power pole or other utility equipment, please be aware that broken wires may still be energized. This could mean a wire contacting the vehicle has also energized the vehicle. Stay inside the vehicle and use a cell phone to call for help. Wait inside until law enforcement and utility personnel arrive.
- Trees and branches may tear down power lines. #1581203 Always watch out for downed power lines that may have been hidden by snow and stay away!

## Stages of Power Restoration

Major storms or natural disasters may cause widespread damage and extended power outages. FMEC takes a methodical and sequential process to restore power in these circumstances. This is to bring power back to the greatest number of FMEC members as soon as possible. Our crews start with the greatest number of members impacted and work our way down to the individual member sites.

### STEP 01

1. High voltage transmission lines supply to substations. Thousands of FMEC members may be affected if the transmission lines are damaged. These must be repaired before other parts of the system can operate.

### STEP 02

2. Assuming the transmission line(s) is functioning, we must now check the distribution substation. Hundreds or even thousands of cooperative members can be served from a distribution substation. Repairs must be made to the substation before our crews look further down the line.

### STEP 03

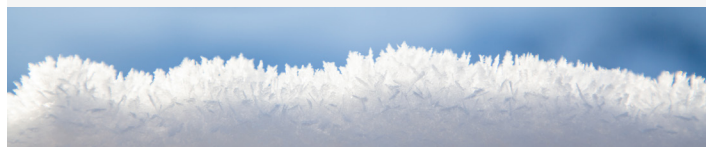
3. If the problem cannot be isolated at the distribution substation, the main distribution feeders are the next to be checked.

### STEP 04

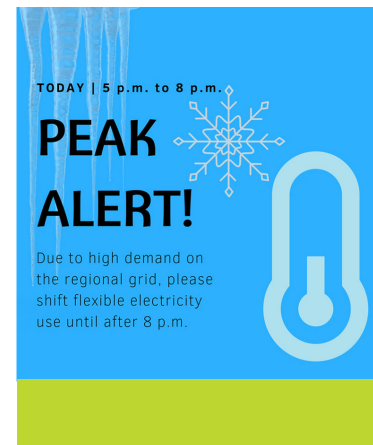
4. If local outages persist, tap lines are the next to be inspected. These lines deliver power to transformers, either mounted on poles or placed on pads for underground service.

### STEP 05

5. If your home remains without power, the service line between the transformer and your home may need to be repaired. Members may need to hire an electrician to repair their equipment as well.



# BE ALERT FOR PEAK ALERTS



During periods of extreme temperatures (low or high), Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative (FMEC) might issue Peak Alert Warnings via local radio stations, local television stations, and on social media.

A peak alert situation means there is an increased demand for energy that can tax the generation, transmission, and distribution system. #1425800 To meet demand, the co-op's wholesale supplier might have to go on the open market to purchase power. This can be very expensive and result in increased costs for the Cooperative.

Members can help keep rates stable and affordable by conserving electricity during the Peak Alert period. FMEC encourages members to participate and shift flexible usage such as dishwashing and laundry, if possible. We also recommend adjusting your thermostat and seeking alternative forms of entertainment that don't use electricity, such as board games and reading, during these periods.

## CLASSIFIED marketplace

### FOR SALE

#### VEHICLES/MOTORIZED:

**2004 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE LAREDO 4 X 4.** High miles, well maintained. Call (507) 433-2712.

#### FARM:

**STRAW.** \$4 per bale. Call (507) 256-4164.

#### GOOD QUALITY MIXED HAY.

800 small square bales. Take one or all. Call anytime (507) 440-2255.

#### 2016 MERIDIAN 5000 BU HOPPER BIN.

\$24,000 new, has storm damage, asking \$8,000 OBO. Call (507) 402-0514.

#### HOUSEHOLD:

##### NEW BATHROOM VANITY & SINK.

White. Sink is 19" x 17" and vanity is 18" x 16". Call (507) 433-5920.

**LEATHER RECLINER.** Maroon, in good condition. \$125. Call (507) 373-1743.

##### OLD MONTGOMERY WARDS POT

**BELLY STOVE.** Model No. Ymt 7326. \$300. Call (507) 438-5068.

**WOOD ROLL TOP DESK.** Light oak finish, wood door pulls, 9 drawers. 53 1/2" H x 33" D x 53 1/2" W. \$500. Call (507) 383-5678.

#### 2 ANTIQUE WOODEN WASHING MACHINES.

Call (507) 440-2494.

#### MISC:

##### FIBERGLASS EXTENSION LADDER.

20 foot, excellent condition. \$125. Call (507) 320-7253.

##### SPLIT WOOD.

Call (507) 320-5918.

##### 2 - GAS ICE AUGERS.

8" and 10". Call (507) 440-3261.

### WANTED

##### OLD WOODEN WAGON WHEELS.

Call (651) 249-3068.

##### RED WING CROCKS.

Call (507) 402-0880.

##### TWIN BED FRAME.

Good used one for twin headboard. Call or text (507) 438-6469 and leave message.

### CLASSIFIED MARKETPLACE RULES

Classified Marketplace ads are printed in our monthly **County Lines** newsletter **FREE OF CHARGE** to our current members.

- Ad deadline is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the issue in which it will be printed. Ads received after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month will be printed a month later. Example: An ad received on or before June 15<sup>th</sup> will appear in the July issue. If it is received on June 16<sup>th</sup> or later, it will appear in the August issue.
- A Classified Marketplace section appears in each issue except for our special Annual Report issue, typically in March.
- We take ads in these categories: For Sale; Wanted; Free/Giveaway
- Ads can be for: Vehicles/Motorized; Animals; Household; Farm; Miscellaneous
- No business ads will be accepted. Ads must be submitted in writing or electronically, not by phone call.
- Ads will not be repeated.

You will find a downloadable form on our website: [www.fmec.coop](http://www.fmec.coop). Select **MY COOPERATIVE**. Click on **NEWSLETTER** under **NEWS & INFO** tab.

You may also email ads to [michelle.rayman@fmec.coop](mailto:michelle.rayman@fmec.coop) or go to the website, use the instructions above, and click on the **NEWSLETTER** tab to electronically submit an ad.

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Periodicals Postage Paid at Albert Lea, MN and other locations.

Postmaster: Send address corrections to:  
County Lines, P.O. Box 611, Albert Lea, MN 56007-0611

County Lines is published monthly, except for the Annual Report edition issued in March, by Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative, 3366 Bridge Avenue, Albert Lea, MN 56007. This monthly publication is designed to provide information about the cooperative to the member-owners of Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative.

President: Jim Krueger, President & CEO  
Telephone: (507) 373-6421

## SPOT YOUR NUMBER

### WIN A \$25 BILL CREDIT

To reward our faithful newsletter readers, we've randomly selected and hidden three (3) member account numbers in the newsletter, each two times.

If you spot your account number, contact the cooperative by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the current month to claim your \$25 bill credit.

Congratulations to Kevin Holdgrafer. He spotted his account number in the January newsletter.

### FREEBORN MOWER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

PO Box 611  
3366 Bridge Avenue  
Albert Lea MN 56007

(507) 373-6421 or (800) 734-6421  
www.fmec.coop  
info@fmec.coop



#### Office Hours:

Monday - Friday, 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

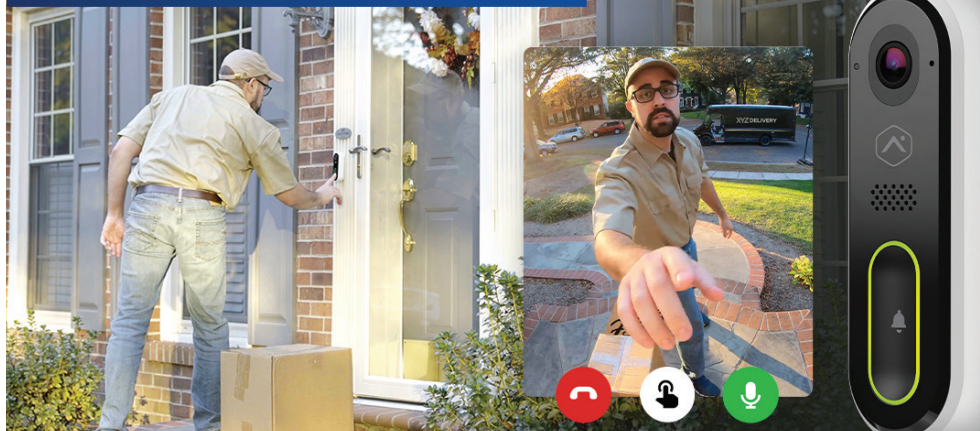
#### Board Meetings:

Typically the last Tuesday of each month.

*Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

## Verify your visitors.

888.264.6380 heartlandss.com



One in four homeowners has had a package stolen.  
**SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING ON YOUR DOORSTEP.**



SECURITY AUTOMATION VIDEO MEDICAL ALERTS

## LET'S COOK



### QUICK BARS

Submitted By: Theresa Jerdet

#### Ingredients:

- 1 box yellow or white cake mix, use only the cake mix bag, nothing else
- 2 eggs
- 5 tbsp. butter, melted
- 2 C. M&M's or chocolate chips

#### Directions:

- Mix all together. Put in greased 9 x 13 pan.
- Bake at 350 for 20 minutes.

Members may submit one short recipe per month by email at [michelle.rayman@fmec.coop](mailto:michelle.rayman@fmec.coop) or by mail at FMEC Newsletter, PO Box 611, Albert Lea, MN 56007. The member whose recipe is published will receive a \$10 electric bill credit.