



Freeborn  
Mower  
Electric  
Cooperative  
*People. Power. Possibilities.*

# county lines

## NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2023 • VOLUME 84 • NO. 02




**SUPPORT  
ELECTRIC  
RELIABILITY IN  
MINNESOTA  
VOICES FOR  
COOPERATIVE  
POWER**

## PAPERLESS BILLING INCENTIVE DRAWING WINNERS

Congratulations to the following winners who were recently drawn from our paperless billing accounts:

- **Cassie Taylor**
- **Dana Smerud**
- **Lee Gulbrandson**
- **Ko H Aung**
- **Carlie Ubaldo**

Thank you to all members who signed up for paperless billing during the incentive period. Paperless billing is convenient. #1360900 It also eliminates paper waste and saves time, labor, and postage expense.

If you haven't yet made the switch to paperless billing, you can do so at any time by contacting our office.

*Minnesota rural electric cooperatives' top legislative priority is the 100% Clean Energy by 2040 bill. See page 2 for an important message from your President & CEO. Learn more and share your concerns by signing up for Voices for Cooperative Power.*

**Go To:**  
[voicesforcooperativepower.com/minnesota/](https://voicesforcooperativepower.com/minnesota/)



## ceo message

Jim Krueger, President & CEO



## HF4/SF7 THE “CARBON-FREE BY 2040” BILL

The Minnesota Legislature is moving at an unprecedented pace on important energy legislation, moving toward requiring that 100% of electricity sold in the state be from carbon-free generation by 2040. The state’s electric cooperatives, including FMEC, agree that clean energy resources should play a large role in our electric supply. However, we do disagree with a timeline that leaps ahead of the development and deployment of technologies required to make this transition.

Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) and electric cooperative leaders have been working with legislators to make certain that electric cooperatives have a voice in the decisions. There is power in our collective voices — our cooperative voices. Recent efforts have secured multiple changes to the bill that are favorable to Minnesota’s electric cooperatives, yet significant concerns regarding electric reliability and affordability still remain. The good news is that cooperative voices are being heard.

Minnesota’s electric cooperatives are advocating for a thoughtful transition plan. The industry is already well on its way to a cleaner electricity system. In 2005, 65% of the state’s electricity was generated by coal. Today, it has dropped to 26% and is projected to be no more than 5% by 2035. A full 30% of energy generation now comes from renewable sources, such

as wind and solar, which is up from just 5% in 2005. Renewable energy generation in Minnesota is projected to be 50% by 2035. Minnesota already leads the country in reduced electric sector carbon dioxide emissions. #26116 However, the fact remains that variable renewable sources (wind, solar) are not 100% reliable.

Developing new renewable generation facilities, equipment, and infrastructure to support carbon-free energy will take time and money. Warnings have already gone out about the potential energy shortfalls in the Midwest during extreme weather. In fact, just this past December 23, the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) declared a maximum generation emergency event to maintain the reliability of the electric system. These events warn the system is nearing a point where rotating power outages may be required. Such events are predicted to happen more often in the coming years.

The bill, which includes the favorable provisions for co-ops as explained above, will likely be signed by the Governor by early February. As Minnesota moves forward to carbon-free energy, we urge our state legislative leaders to continue developing a clean energy transition plan that ensures electric reliability and affordability for our electric cooperative members.

## NEWLY CREDENTIALLED COOPERATIVE DIRECTORS



*Congratulations to FMEC Directors Jay Neitzell of District #2 (l) and Richard Schaffler of District #4 (r) on their recent attainment of Credentialed Cooperative Director.*

The Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) Program is part of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Director Education Program consisting of five courses that focus on governance knowledge and the essential skills required of electric cooperative directors. #1436500 The CCD prepares directors to fulfill their fiduciary duty as elected officials serving on behalf of their membership.

The CCD is earned by attending all five required courses and successfully completing a learning assessment for each. These courses are:

- Director Duties/Liabilities
- Understanding the Electric Business
- Financial Decision-Making
- Board Operations and Process
- Strategic Planning

## member news

### LOBBY CLOSED

The FMEC lobby will be closed on Friday, February 3rd, from 12:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. to make necessary repairs caused by water damage.

### SAVE THE DATE

Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative will hold its 86<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting on April 22, 2023. Watch for details in the Annual Report available in April.

### DIRECTOR NOMINEE UPDATE

As of the application deadline of January 4, 2023, the following members have filed for directorship:

- **District #3: Steve Garbisch\***
- **District #6: Matt Maras; Joseph Pacovsky\*; Allen Pelvit**
- **District #9: Larry Irvine\***

Nomination by application has closed. Nomination(s) by petition will close at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, February 10, 2023. To become a nominee by petition requires fifteen (15) members from the District to sign in support of a particular nominee on the petition form.

Should only one nominee in a District come forward before the final deadline by petition, that nominee will be deemed elected as Director. In a District(s) with more than one nominee by the petition deadline, members in that District will be mailed a ballot on February 23. Voting instructions will accompany a biography of each nominee. Ballots must be received at the third-party ballot company by March 22 to be included in the count.

*\* indicates incumbent*

**FREEBORN MOWER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE IS FIGHTING FOR THE BEST INTERESTS OF OUR LOCAL MEMBER-OWNERS.**

## WHERE HAVE THEY GONE?

**We need your help locating these former members.**

Their 2022 Capital Credit General Retirement checks were returned by the post office as undeliverable. If these former members do not claim their Capital Credit disbursement the money will be forfeited in accordance with Minnesota Statute and will be used to fund scholarships.

If you have contact information for any of these people, please contact Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative at (507) 379-8860 or joanne.miller@fmec.coop.

- |                          |                         |                           |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| ADAMS, Nancy L           | HIMEBAUGH, Ella         | RODRIGUEZ, Victor I       |
| ANDERSON, Daniel S       | HINDT, Paul E           | ROSAS, Heather M          |
| ARNOLD, Sylvia J         | HORSMAN, Justin P       | ROSE, Faith J             |
| ASWEGAN, Alan            | HULETT, Eulia           | RUBLE, Steve              |
| AVELAR SR, Jose          | JADAV, Bobbi J          | RUIZ, Alexandra L         |
| BAILEY, Kirk             | JOHNSON, Nicholas J     | RYAN, Chad M              |
| BAKKEN, Jessica A        | JOHNSON, Susan M        | SAHR, Devon R             |
| BELL, Eddie A            | KAW, Ta                 | SCHECKLMAN, Nicole G      |
| BOULLION, Diane K        | KELLY, Tyler W          | SCHILLING, Delores K      |
| BRADY, Jesse C           | KENT, Rose M            | SCHLICHTER JR, Theodore J |
| BRASE, Dane O            | KINNY, Delbert          | SCHREIBER, Jonathan T     |
| BROWN, Margaret K        | KOPP, James             | SEDO, Eli A               |
| BUNDY, Patricia L        | KRACHMER, Jennifer J    | SEELEY, Todd              |
| BUSH, Thomas K           | KRACHMER, Shaun         | SEVERTSON, Michael K      |
| BUSHAW, Steve P          | LA PLANTE, Susan        | SHERMAN, Mary E           |
| CAMBERN, Melinda J       | LARK, Brittany C        | SLATER, Sonja W           |
| CHRISTENSEN, Alexandre L | LARSEN, Roseanne        | SMITH, Denise             |
| CHRISTIANSON, Viola      | LARSON, Nicole V        | LARSON, Steven M          |
| CISNEROS, Angie M        | LASHBROOK, Desiree R    | SORBO, Rich               |
| CITI MORTGAGE            | LEIN, Preston J         | SORENSEN, Dehna A         |
| CONSTANCIO, Anthony      | LONGORIA, Alejandra     | STARLING, Mark            |
| COOK, William & Janice G | LONGORIA, Angel         | STEENE, Michelle A        |
| CORDES, Britney N        | LOPEZ AGOSTO, Darlyne M | STOCKDALE, Gaye M         |
| DAVID, Katharine R       | LUGO, Francis M         | SUCHANEK, Janiffer        |
| DAVIDSON, Marvid D       | MANUEL, Julie           | SVENDSEN, Krystal J       |
| DECKER, Danniell P       | MARQUEZ JR, Ernesto     | SWARD, Kelly J            |
| DORMAN, Andrea A         | MICHAELSON, Rodney P    | SWENSON, Mike             |
| DOYLE, Stephanie M       | MILLER, Michelle        | TABOR, Casey L            |
| ERICKSON, Steven J       | MORENO, Brandon L       | TAUER, Tasha L            |
| FASSLER, Kimberly L      | MULLENBACH, Dylan E     | THOMAS, Carolyn E         |
| FERGUSON, Doug           | MYERS, Bruce A          | THOMPSON, Pamela S        |
| FOLEY, Wallace B         | NELSON, Valerie M       | THORSON, Michael B        |
| FRAZIER-BRUNS, Bonnie L  | OLEARY, Andrew          | TUTTLE, Thomas L          |
| FRIEHL, Taylor P         | OLLMAN, Glenn           | TWITO, Beverly G          |
| GIESLER, Jill            | OTTO, Steven M          | US BANK HOME MORTGAGE     |
| GRAVES, Bambi            | OVERGAARD, Scott        | VAN HAL, Wilford          |
| GRIEVE, Lisa J           | PALMER, Krista S        | VAN NESS, Daryl W         |
| GRIMM, Mark A            | PAULSON, Jessica M      | VANDERHORST, Kathy        |
| GULLICKSON, Joyce E      | PINTER, Alyssa N        | VANMINSEL, Mikayla R      |
| HAGEN, Mitchell J        | POSTHUMUS, Tom          | VOGT, Dennis J            |
| HARLAND, Shelby L        | POWERS, Sonja J         | VOIGT, Timothy            |
| HEINY, Amy B             | QUINTANA, Jose L        | WANZEK, Drew F            |
| HELGESON, Wayne H        | RAIN, Roger C           | WESTENDORF, Cheyenne D    |
| HEMANN, Thomas J         | RATIGAN JR, John J      | WILLIAMS, Rick D          |
| HEMINGWAY, Rande         | REESE, Latonya S        | WUERTZ, Cora L            |
| HENDRICKSON, Lucas M     | REIM, Courtney A        | YEBRA, Sukey              |
| HIBLE, Toni L            | RICE, Amy               |                           |

## SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE! APPLY NOW.



## LUCK OF THE DRAW SCHOLARSHIPS

Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative offers ten Luck of the Draw Scholarships.

The deadline to apply is March 10, 2023, by 3:30 p.m.

### PROGRAM DETAILS:

- Ten scholarships of \$1,000 will be awarded.
- The Luck of the Draw Scholarship drawing will be held Saturday, April 22, 2023, around 11:00 a.m. during the cooperative's annual meeting. The meeting will be held at the Albert Lea High School, 2000 Tiger Lane, Albert Lea, MN.
- **Must be present to win.**

### 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 full-time college students in the fall of 2023.
- Proof of enrollment must be presented to FMEC before the funds will be disbursed to the school. Proof of enrollment does not need to accompany the application.
- In the event the student is unable to fulfill his/her enrollment obligations, the award is forfeited.

Applications are available online or from our office.

## ELECTRIC LINeworker SCHOLARSHIPS

Two applicants pursuing post-secondary education in an Electric Lineworker Program will each be awarded a scholarship for \$1000, payable in two payments. Electrical lineworkers install, maintain, and restore electric power lines.

### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS ARE:

- Recipients must be enrolled in an Electric Lineworker Program to begin in the fall of the current year. #1360900 In the event the lineworker program is full and the college of choice is maintaining a student waiting list, the recipient must provide proof in writing in order to hold funds for the next open enrollment period.
- The student must successfully complete the first semester with a grade point average of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale to be awarded the second half of the scholarship funds.
- Preference will be given to Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative members and residents of Freeborn and Mower counties.
- Selection criteria will be based on scholastic achievement, school and community involvement, work history, and an essay submission.

Applications are available online or from our office.

The application deadline is May 1, 2023.

## RIVERLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative is proud to offer scholarships to Riverland Community College. Scholarships are awarded to children of Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative members and also to adult members of the cooperative returning to school to further their education.

### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS ARE:

- To hold a current membership in Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative or be the child of a current member.
- Have demonstrated financial need.
- Be enrolled as a full-time student in any field.

Non-traditional students are encouraged to apply.

Please contact Riverland Foundation for information and scholarship applications at (507) 433-0630.

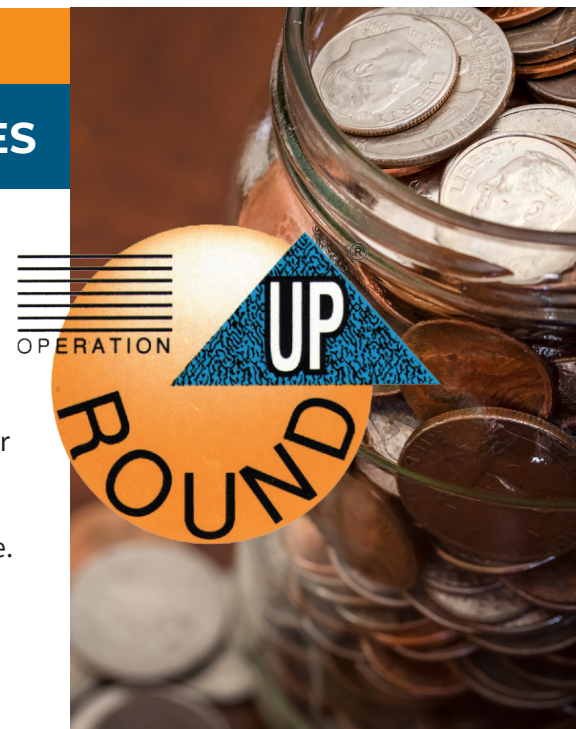
## OPERATION ROUND UP®

### DOING GOOD FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Thank you for your continued support of Operation Round Up! Operation Round Up® posted a record-setting year in 2022 with a total of \$146,905.58 in grants made throughout the cooperative's service territory. The fourth quarter grants totaled \$42,659.99, with grants distributed to 52 applicants.

Member contributions of only a few cents each month are pooled together and fund a wide variety of initiatives and improvements that strengthen our local communities. Contributions are made by "rounding up" your electric bill to the next whole dollar amount. Donations are tax-deductible. Operation Round Up is a voluntary, opt-out program.

Applications are reviewed and awards are made quarterly. Applications are available online or from our office. #1436500 The first quarter application deadline is March 15, 2023.



## RURAL ELECTRIC YOUTH TOUR 2023

### EXPERIENCE D.C., CO-OP STYLE! APPLICATIONS DUE FEBRUARY 10

Every June, more than 1,900 high school students from across the country spend a week in D.C. as part of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. The Youth Tour is an awesome way to learn about this great nation, develop leadership skills, gain a better understanding of electric cooperatives, and explore the famous monuments and museums. Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative will sponsor two high school students (junior or senior) from our service territory, all expenses paid.



For more details and to apply, go to [www.fmec.coop](http://www.fmec.coop) or contact our office. You may also reach out to your high school counselor for application materials.

Questions can be directed to Lori Jimenez at (507) 379-8852 or by email at [lori.jimenez@fmec.coop](mailto:lori.jimenez@fmec.coop).



# BE PREPARED FOR WINTER STORMS

## WHEN YOUR POWER GOES OUT, SO DO WE!

When outages occur, crews work hard to restore electric service, no matter the weather conditions. It may take time to deal with the aftermath of storms and high winds, so we appreciate your patience. Whatever the circumstances are, we won't quit until the power has been restored to all the residences, farms, and businesses that we serve.

## FOR YOUR FAMILY'S COMFORT AND SAFETY, BE PREPARED FOR WHATEVER MOTHER NATURE SENDS OUR WAY.

Keep on hand a ready supply of canned, non-perishable food and bottled water, necessary medicines, and baby supplies. Check that your flashlights work and that you have fresh replacement batteries. Avoid using candles. Do not bring gas or charcoal grills indoors. #26116 These are intended for outdoor cooking 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.

Let a family member or friend know your plans in advance.

## ALWAYS ASSUME DOWNED POWER LINES ARE STILL ENERGIZED.

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 call for help. Wait inside until law enforcement and utility personnel arrive.

## SEQUENTIAL APPROACH TO POWER RESTORATION

When a power outage occurs, we always work to restore power to the largest number of members first before inspecting individual sites.

- STEP 01** **High-Voltage Transmission Lines** supply electricity to substations. While they rarely fail, these facilities must be repaired before substations will operate.
- STEP 02** **Distribution Substations** can each serve hundreds or even thousands of members. When a substation is out of service, repairs must be made before electricity can flow to the main distribution lines.
- STEP 03** **Main Distribution Lines** carry electricity to large groups of members in a geographic area. A problem with a main distribution line will disrupt the flow of electricity to tap lines.
- STEP 04** **Tap Lines** deliver electricity to the transformers. Transformers may be mounted on power poles or placed on pads for underground service to individual homes, farms, and businesses.
- STEP 05** **Individual Sites** may remain without power should a problem exist between the transformer and your premises. This is often the case if your neighbors' power has been restored but there is no electricity at your site. Always report an outage to help line crews isolate local issues.

# WHAT IS A PEAK ALERT?

TODAY 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

## PEAK ALERT!

Due to high demand on the regional grid, please shift flexible electricity use until after 8 p.m.

The demand for electricity changes from season to season, day to day, and hour to hour. Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative (FMEC), through its power suppliers, continuously monitors electricity demand throughout the region. When high demand climbs to levels that can threaten the integrity of the electric grid and/or are periods of extreme expense, load management methods are used to shed some of this demand and shift it to hours of lesser demand. In addition to direct load management controls, cooperative members are urged to voluntarily restrain from contributing unnecessarily to high electricity demand.

During these circumstances, FMEC issues a "Peak Alert" message to notify members of the imminent control of certain electrical loads and the need for voluntary assistance in holding down the highest, and most costly, demands. This benefits all cooperative members because it is extremely costly to pay wholesale charges based on peak demands.

# CLASSIFIED marketplace

## FOR SALE

**VEHICLES/MOTORIZED:**  
**1997 DODGE DAKOTA PICKUP.** Extended cab, topper, 8-cylinder, automatic, 4-wheel drive. 130,000 miles. \$4,000. Call (507) 383-3746.

**FARM:**  
**560 DIESEL.** Wide front, new batteries, pump redone, fast hitch, new seat, fenders, repainted, chains 18.4-38. Call (507) 383-0410.

**HOUSEHOLD:**  
**1940'S ANCHOR HOCKING** clear & blue bubble **DINNERWARE.** **AVON GLASSWARE** - red. Call (507) 383-4909.

**MISC:**  
**CARRYALL.** 8' x 5'. \$900. Call in evening. (507) 325-2427.

**GOLF CLUBS.** Tour Edge Exotics C721 irons, 6-AW. Steel shaft, R-flex. \$300 OBO. Call (507) 391-4546.

**CLAM ICE FISHING SHELTER.** Flip-Over top, 2-man capacity. \$60. Call (507) 437-1615.

**HANDICAPPED SCOOTER.** Battery-powered, less than 10 hours. Call (218) 324-1821.

## WANTED

**OLD WOODWORKING HAND PLANES.** Metal body. Rusty and dirty, no problem. Call/text (507) 438-8604.

**GLASS BUTTER CHURN.** Call (507) 402-0880.

**STURDY OLDER CARD TABLE & CHAIRS.** In good condition. Call or text (507) 438-6469.

**DEPT 56** either **DICKENS** or **NORTH POLE** collections or individual buildings. Call or text (507) 754-5103.

## FREE

**WORLD BOOK ENCYCLOPEDIAS** from 1980. Call (507) 265-3269.

*There will be no classified ads in April since the issue will be our special Annual Report.*

## 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.

- Ads will not be repeated.

You can review the complete Classified Marketplace Rules and/or submit an ad at [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. Ads will not be accepted over the phone.

# 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. Hidden account numbers are spelled out numerically. (Ex: #123456)

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

Congratulations to Lowell Elmer!  
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.



## AVOID UTILITY SCAMS

*Scammers will threaten you with everything from shutting off power to your home to legal action. Don't fall victim to these types of scams.*

- Our employees will never show up at your door to demand payment.
- Never give personal information to an unknown caller or visitor. Our representatives have access to the details they need to service your account.
- Demands for immediate payment by wire transfer, cryptocurrency, gift cards, or cash reload cards should immediately raise red flags.
- If you think you've been contacted by a scammer falsely representing the co-op, please let us know as soon as possible.

## LET'S COOK



## BEST BANANA BREAD

Submitted By: **Christa Eastvold**

- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 2 large eggs
- 2 C. bananas
- ½ C. + 2 tsp. milk
- 1 C. softened butter
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. cinnamon
- 1 C. sugar
- 1 C. brown sugar
- 4 C. flour

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Mix wet ingredients first then combine with remaining ingredients. Pour into 2 greased loaf pans. Bake 1 hour or until toothpick comes out clean. Makes 2 loaves. Enjoy!

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.