



Freeborn  
Mower  
Electric  
Cooperative

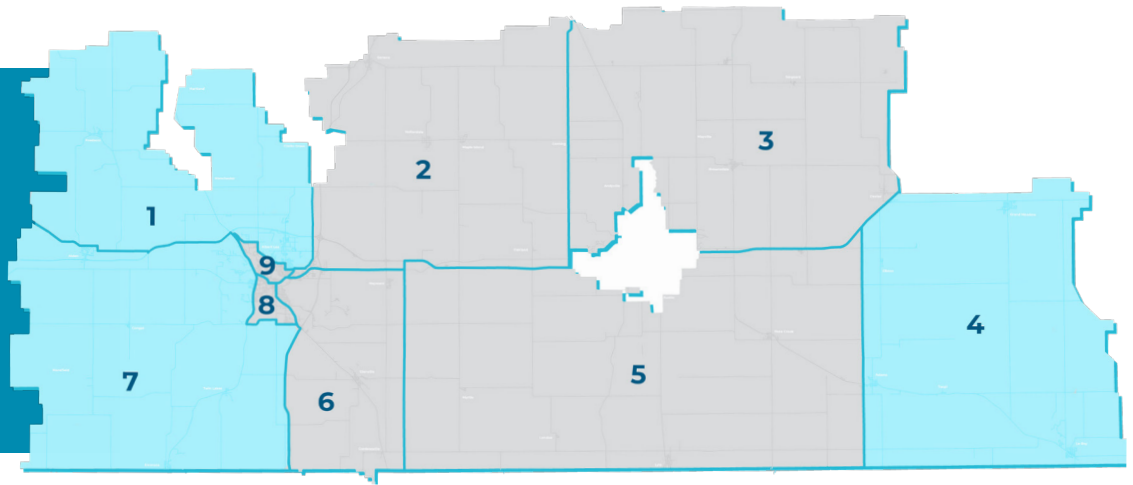
People. Power. Possibilities.

# county lines

## NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2023 • VOLUME 84 • NO. 11

## SEEKING APPLICANTS FOR THREE DIRECTOR SEATS



Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative is governed by a nine-person board of directors. The directors are elected by their fellow FMEC members residing in the district. Elections are held in three districts each year, with each director elected to serve a three-year term.

Applications are now being accepted for the position of director in the following three districts:

**DISTRICT 1:** Represents the northwest part of Albert Lea, Freeborn, Hartland, Manchester, and Clarks Grove areas.

**DISTRICT 4:** Represents areas near and including, Elkton, Grand Meadow, Adams, Taopi, and LeRoy.

**DISTRICT 7:** Represents the areas in and around Alden, Conger, Twin Lakes, and Emmons.

If you are a member of Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative residing in one of the districts holding an election and would like to run for the position of FMEC director, please contact our office for an information packet. If you are unsure of the district in which you reside, it is shown on your electric statement.

Learn more about director qualifications, the election process and how to apply on page 4.

***Applications are due by 3:30 p.m. on December 11, 2023.***

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF DIRECTORS

While representing the members of their district, elected directors become a part of a nine-member board tasked with making decisions in the best interest of all members and the cooperative business. Directors work with the management team to provide direction and general oversight of the cooperative. Directors set policies, including retail rates.

To be effective, directors must be able to read financial statements, forecasts, and strategic reports. Director oversight ensures the democratic functioning of the cooperative in accordance with the Cooperative's Bylaws and respects the confidentiality of information provided or discussed. #1652406 Directors must attend monthly meetings at the cooperative headquarters, typically on the last Tuesday of each month. They may also be called to additional meetings and training sessions.

# ceo message

Jim Krueger, President & CEO



## WEATHER TESTS THE GRID

While we're now firmly in autumn, the excessive heat wave of late summer remains relatively fresh in our memories. Temperatures the week of August 21 — primarily on August 23 and 24 — soared into the 90s, topping above 100 degrees. The regional electric grid was also stressed by high humidity and low generation output from intermittent generation resources. In fact, during this critical time the contribution by intermittent resources peaked at about 13% of the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) regional system resources. Dairyland Power, a wholesale electric supplier to FMEC, responded by operating its power plants at full capacity. Dairyland operates within the MISO system. Data indicates that the Dairyland system also approached its own record peak demand during this week, surpassing the previous summer peak demand hit in June 2018.

The contributions of intermittent sources fell short when it was needed the most. #2247501 During the MISO peak demand hours, traditional baseload sources contributed 87% to the MISO electric generation mix.

In early September this year, during the Labor Day weekend specifically, temperatures again soared into the upper 90s. However, the humidity was lower, and with many businesses closed, the demand for electricity was reduced. Intermittent resources performed somewhat better during this period of high demand.

## EPA PROPOSALS PUT RELIABILITY IN QUESTION

These scenarios bring into question new federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) draft rules aimed at both new and existing coal and natural gas power plants. The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) opposes the rules expected to be finalized in spring 2024. Why?

- The proposal hinges on the widespread adoption of clean hydrogen, and carbon capture and storage. While promising, these technologies are not yet widespread or commercially available.
- The rules would assert vast new authority of major economic and political significance without a clear statement from Congress.
- The compliance deadlines are unrealistic and unachievable. The timelines endanger new and existing natural gas plants and all but ensure coal units will opt to shut down by 2035. Unfortunately, replacement infrastructure and technologies will not be available to fill the void in generation capacity.

**Bottom line: the proposed EPA rules threaten electric grid reliability and affordability.**

This load control test is performed in advance of the winter Full Load Control season to ensure that our members with interruptible heating (dual fuel) are familiar with the control sequence and to validate that their backup heating systems will function properly.

The control test will begin at 6:55 a.m. on Wednesday, November 15, 2023. Heating services will be fully restored by 11:00 a.m. Please contact our Energy Solutions Department with any questions regarding this test.

**WINTER  
PREPAREDNESS TEST  
FOR INTERRUPTIBLE  
HEAT (DUAL FUEL)  
WEDNESDAY,  
NOVEMBER 15**

# member news

## HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Our office will be open regular hours on Veterans Day, November 10.

Our office will be closed on Thursday, November 23, and Friday, November 24 to allow our employees time with their families over the Thanksgiving Holiday.

## NOTICE OF INTERCONNECTION DISTRIBUTED ENERGY: CO-GENERATORS AND SMALL POWER PRODUCERS

In accordance with the adopted Cooperative Rules implementing 216.B.164, Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from co-generators and small power producers that satisfy the conditions and become a Qualifying Facility. A Qualifying Facility is a cogeneration and small power production facility that satisfies the conditions in the 18 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 292.101 (b).

Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative has posted the current interconnection documents on the cooperative's website ([www.fmec.coop](http://www.fmec.coop)). Click on Energy Services and then Renewables. Proceed by using the NOVA Power Portal. A complete Distributed Energy Document Library is available online.

All interconnections require an application and approval to become a Qualifying Facility. Any disputes over interconnection, sales, and purchases are subject to resolution by the cooperative.

For further information contact our office at (507) 373-6421 or (800) 734-6421.

## HAVE A SAFE HUNT

Never use a power pole to support a tree stand. When shooting, always make sure powerlines are not in your line of sight.

Never fire at utility equipment — substations, poles, lines, transformers, insulators, or any other electrical equipment. This type of vandalism is dangerous! Broken equipment can drop down and create an electrocution hazard and/or spark a fire. #1652406 At a minimum, it will weaken the reliability of our local power grid, potentially creating an outage that could affect thousands of consumers.

# A VETERANS DAY SALUTE

Thank you to all who have served and those currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. Our nation owes profound gratitude to these individuals and their families for their many sacrifices and contributions.



Among the Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative workforce are four Veterans: Allen Hendriks, Army National Guard; T.J. Kalis, Army National Guard; Nick Roling, Army National Guard; and John Kalis, U.S. Air Force.

## NOTICE OF RIGHTS FOR HOUSEHOLDS OF MILITARY SERVICE PERSONNEL



The Minnesota State Statute (325E.028 Utility Payment for Military Service Personnel) provides protections against a utility disconnection if a member of your household has been ordered into active military duty, for deployment, or for a permanent change in duty station during a period of active duty.

For more information or to apply for shut-off protection contact our office or go to <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/325E.028>



DIRECTOR QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants must meet all eligibility requirements as specified in the Cooperative’s Bylaws. Among the qualifications and responsibilities outlined in the Bylaws, nominees must be:

- 1. a current member receiving electric service at their primary residence, and
- 2. the primary residence must be in the district in which the director is elected.

No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director of the Cooperative who:

- 1. is not a natural person and a member of the Cooperative, receiving service at the member’s primary residence in the district from which the director is elected;
- 2. within five (5) years preceding a director candidate’s nomination was or during service on the Board of Directors is finally adjudged to be guilty of a felony;
- 3. within three (3) years preceding a director candidate’s nomination was an employee of the Cooperative;
- 4. is an employee of the Cooperative or a grandparent, parent, spouse, co-habitant, child, or grandchild of an employee of the Cooperative;
- 5. is a person that is a grandparent, parent, spouse, co-habitant, child, or grandchild of an incumbent director whose district seat is not up for re-election at that time;
- 6. is in any way employed by or substantially financially interested in an enterprise competing with the Cooperative or any Cooperative-affiliated business;
- 7. is or becomes the full-time employee or agent of, or who is or becomes the full-time employer or principal of, another director;
- 8. is engaged in conduct that is a violation of law or violation of a #1776207 Cooperative policy or policies, or whenever a director has materially failed to satisfy his/her duties as a director, including the duty to regularly attend meetings of the Board of Directors; or
- 9. is employed by, materially affiliated with, or has a financial interest in, any individual or entity possessing a material or substantial conflict of interest with the Cooperative or a Cooperative subsidiary.

ELECTION PROCESS

Completed applications are due at our office by 3:30 p.m. on December 11, 2023. After applications have been returned, members in each of the three districts holding an election will be notified of those who have filed.

POST FILING DEADLINE — NOMINATION BY PETITION

After the filing application deadline has expired, persons may still be nominated by filing a petition form, also available from our office. To become a nominee by petition requires fifteen (15) members from the district in which the election is being held to sign in support of a particular nominee on the petition form. The petition form must be submitted to the cooperative office by 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 17, 2024.

WHEN THERE IS A SINGLE NOMINEE

Should only one nominee in a district come forward before the final deadline by petition, that applicant will be deemed elected as Director.

WHEN THERE ARE MULTIPLE NOMINEES

Should more than one nominee come forth by the petition deadline, either by direct nomination or petition, a biography of each nominee and a mail ballot will be sent to all members in the district on Wednesday, January 31, 2024. Returned ballots will be due on Monday, February 19, 2024.

Please return mailed ballots in the proper envelopes to the third-party ballot company and not to our cooperative. Also, allow for any possible mail delays.

DIRECTORS BEGIN TERM

The elected Directors will be seated during the Annual Meeting on Tuesday evening, March 26, 2024.



CAULK FOR COZINESS

Preparing for winter means more than rediscovering your favorite sweaters, warm scarves, and fuzzy slippers. Make sure your home is buttoned up, too!

Fight against energy waste and chilling drafts by closing any gaps around your windows. #2247501 All you need is an exterior caulk, scraper, utility knife, caulking gun, and some effort!

- 1. To identify gaps, look where the window frame meets the side of the house. If there is a gap that’s less than a half inch, you can repair it with caulk.
- 2. Clean and dry the area, scrapping out any existing caulk.
- 3. When selecting the caulk for your project, consider adhesion, durability, flexibility, drying time, and ease of cleanup. Check color choices and if it can be painted.
- 4. Snip the tip of the caulk at a 45-degree angle and load it into the caulking gun.
- 5. Run the tip slowly and evenly across the base of the crack. Finish by running a damp finger along the bead to smooth it out.

GET PEACE OF MIND AGAINST EMERGENCY HOME REPAIR COSTS

Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative has partnered with HomeServe, an independent company separate from us, to offer members like you optional coverage to help protect against the costs of unexpected breakdowns.

HomeServe offers a comprehensive suite of home protection plans for the repair and maintenance of a wide range of energy, and water-related lines and systems.



LEARN MORE

Scan this code, call (833) 334-1874, or visit [www.FMECHomeServe.com](http://www.FMECHomeServe.com) to learn more about plans available to eligible homeowners in your area.





## REBATE REMINDER



We offer rebates on the installation of a variety of equipment and appliances. Check out the **REBATE** tab on our website ([www.fmec.coop](http://www.fmec.coop)).

While we require the rebate applications to be filed within three months of the purchase date, we urge you to turn them in as soon as possible. Current rebates are in place through December 31, 2023, or until funds are depleted. Rebates submitted within three months but after December 31, 2023, will not qualify if the rebate is no longer offered in 2024.

## SNOWBIRDS TAKE NOTE!

*This is the time of year when many from our area prepare to head south to avoid a harsh winter. To keep your electric usage to a minimum while you're away, we recommend:*

- Turn off the water supply. Exceptions would be homes with a fire sprinkler system or a hot water heating system. Having turned off the water, drain the pipes and give each toilet a flush. Close and drain outdoor faucets.
- Make sure all windows and doors close tightly. There is still time to install new weatherstripping, if necessary.
- A thermostat setting of 55 degrees F should prevent pipes and drains from freezing, provided there are no significant weatherization leaks or a lack of insulation in those areas.
- Shut off and disconnect every electrical device that you can. Don't forget instant-on devices such as computers, televisions, coffee makers, gaming consoles, microwave ovens, and so forth. #1776207 Although appearing to be off, instant-on electronics will continue to draw electricity.
- If feasible, clean out, defrost, and disconnect refrigerators and freezers.



Make sure you've signed up for SmartHub. This will allow you to track the electric consumption at your home, be alerted to power outages, and pay your bill.

Get extra peace of mind with a home monitoring and security system from Heartland Security Systems. [www.heartlandss.com](http://www.heartlandss.com)  
888-264-6380

## MEMBER NOTICE TREE TRIMMING - BROWNSDALE AREA

Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative has contracted with Asplundh Tree Service for vegetation management in the Brownsdale area. Please contact our office at (800) 734-6421 or [info@fmec.coop](mailto:info@fmec.coop) for any questions.



## CLASSIFIED marketplace

### FOR SALE

#### VEHICLES/MOTORIZED:

**1988 FORD 250.** Gas, many new parts. Good shape. Lowest price. \$3,500. Call (507) 402-0118.

#### FARM:

**1973 JOHN DEERE 4230 TRACTOR.** Cab, 16 speeds, 7,380 hours. \$25,000 OBO. Call (507) 433-9655.

**STRAW.** \$4 per bale. Call (507) 383-7858.

**WAGON GEAR.** 7' X 12' steel barge box and hoist. Call (507) 279-0838 or (507) 279-0949.

#### HOUSEHOLD:

**ROCKER RECLINER.** Brown. In excellent condition. \$50. Call or text (507) 440-1481.

**ROLL TOP COMPUTER DESK with MATCHING 2 DRAWER WOOD FILE CABINET & CHAIR.** Call (507) 373-3082.

**DOWN PILLOWS.** 20 x 30 - \$45 ea. 20 x 28 - \$40 ea. Call (507) 373-0093.

**WHIRLPOOL STOVE.** Ceramic glass top, electric, regular & convection oven, self-clean. Good shape. \$250. Call (507) 373-8264.

**ELKAY STAINLESS STEEL SINK.** New. 23 x 17, 2 - sinks 12 x 9½, 3 holes for faucet & soap. \$200. Call (507) 440-1222.

#### MISCELLANEOUS:

**TIRES.** 18" Kumbo Esta LX, 255/45 2R. Less than 200 miles on them. \$150. Call (507) 297-5531.

**CARHARTT SNOWPANTS.** Boys, 4-6, 16" inseam - \$6. **MEN KEY COVERALL.** Large, tan - \$10. Call (507) 448-3491.

**AGFAB LAWN SWEEPER W/ DETHATCHER.** 43". \$100. Call (507) 383-3088 or (507) 373-1713.

**3-WHEEL BIKE.** Adult. Call (507) 440-0679.

**OAK FIREWOOD.** Cut into 3' lengths. Ideal for outdoor furnaces. Call (507) 383-2432.

**ALLOWAY SNOWBLOWER.** 8', 2-stage, dual auger, 540 PTO, w/ hydraulic cylinder for spout. \$1,200. Call (507) 460-0248.

**NURTURE RIGHT 360 EGG INCUBATOR.** \$75. Call (507) 373-0263.

**NEW TONAU COVER.** Tri-fold, 6'3", fits 1997 - 2011 Dodge Dakota. \$100. Call (507) 219-1007.

**CHAR-BROIL GAS GRILL.** Table both ends, extra burner. John Deere cover. Excellent condition. Call (507) 438-0524.

**WEATHERED 12" BARN BOARDS & BATTENS.** Various lengths, great for decorating or crafting. Call (507) 383-3438.

**STANLEY FATMAX SAW.** 14", abrasive metal cut chop saw. Excellent condition. \$50. Call (507) 460-8601.

**NECK SINK** w/hardware for barber or beauty shop. Beige, with Formica top, & cash cabinet. \$195 OBO. Call (507) 437-1615.

**OAK & MAPLE FIREWOOD.** Air-dried and split. Delivery available. Call (507) 256-4233.

### WANTED

**OLD MAGAZINES, CATALOGS, BROCHURES, and DOCUMENTS.** Call (507) 402-0880.

**VINTAGE ALUMINUM CHRISTMAS TREE** with light color wheel. Send photos or call/text. (507) 438-6469.

### FREE

**OAK FIREPLACE MANTEL.** You pick-up. Call (507) 273-4557.

**PUNCH BOWL with GLASS CUPS.** Call (507) 324-5463.

### 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.
- One ad/item per member, per month.

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.

## FOOD AND TOY DRIVE



*Help make this holiday season brighter for those less fortunate in our communities.*

Donations of non-perishable food and new, unopened toys may be dropped off at the Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative office, until December 8<sup>th</sup>. Donations will be disbursed by the local Salvation Army.



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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. 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 Lawrence Simonsen!  
He spotted his account number in the October 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](http://www.fmec.coop)  
[info@fmec.coop](mailto: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.*



*We are thankful for  
our Freeborn Mower  
Electric Cooperative  
members — now  
more than 21,000  
strong — and consider  
it a privilege to  
serve you and your  
communities.*

*Wishing you a wonderful  
Thanksgiving holiday,*

*Freeborn Mower  
Electric Cooperative  
Directors and Employees*

## LET'S COOK



### MAPLE SYRUP

**Submitted By: Rita Williamson**

- 2 cups white sugar
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup light Karo syrup
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 teaspoons maple extract

#### Directions:

In a saucepan, combine 2 cups of white sugar, 1/4 cup of brown sugar, and 1 cup of water. Place the saucepan over medium heat and bring the mixture to a boil. After simmering for 10 minutes, add 1 cup of light Karo syrup. Allow the syrup to cool, then stir in 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract and 2 teaspoons of maple extract. Store syrup in the refrigerator.

*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.*